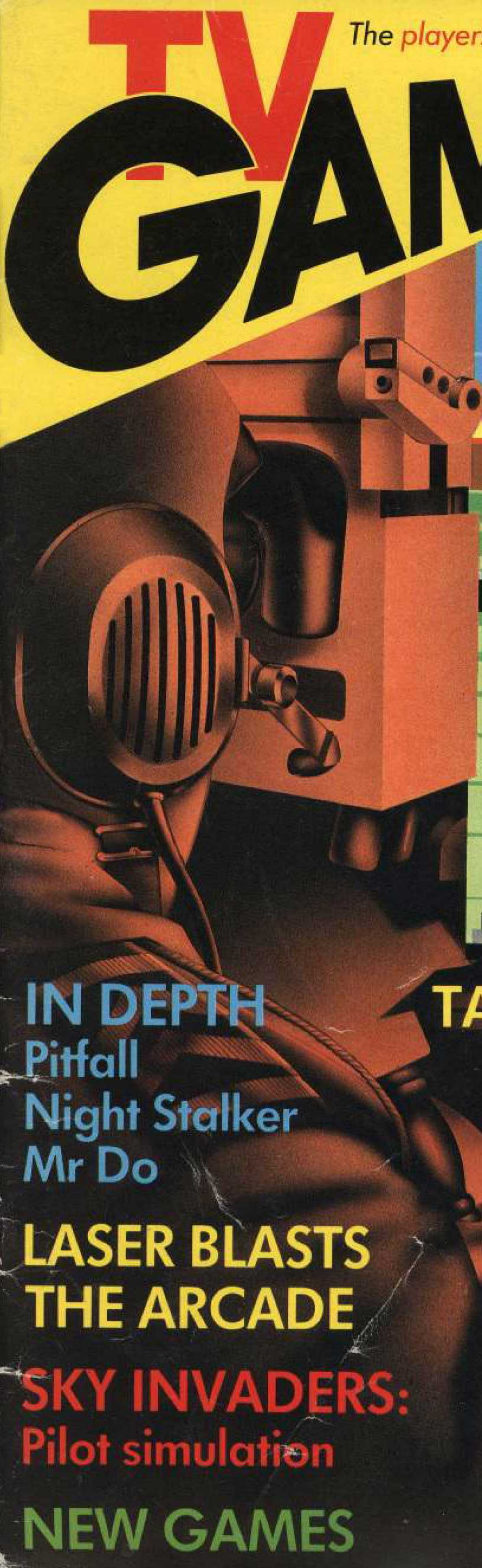
TV GAMER

The players guide to games on screen.

85p
MARCH 1984

NOW MONTHLY



IN DEPTH
Pitfall
Night Stalker
Mr Do

LASER BLASTS THE ARCADE

SKY INVADERS:
Pilot simulation

NEW GAMES

TANK GAMES REVIEWED

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RENDEZVOUS

NASA

FLT#

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You'd better get t
One day you might b

SPSm 19.3
ALT 172
MET 98

FUEL: 640
STAT 40

LAUNCH SCRUB

SPACE SH
A JOURNEY I

DEVELOPED WITH NASA'S
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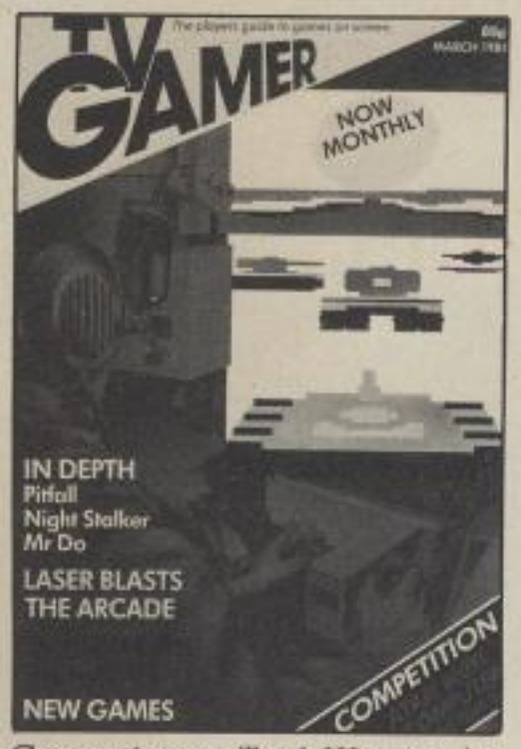

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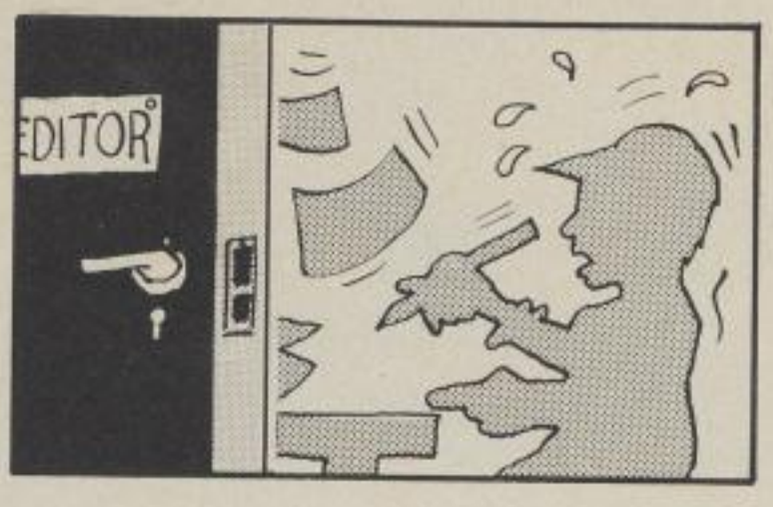

The Green Eye-shade Department

Welcome to the new TV Gamer. Changing over to a monthly edition and putting lots of colour features in the mag is really only the outward display of some pretty heavy reprogramming here at our Oxford Street offices. Together with the bigger demand by gamers for hard information about games and improving gameplay, we've noticed that more and more of you are thinking about , or already switching from , games-only systems to full-blown computers. Many of your letters ask us about the latest computer game or the best choice of system.

Well, TV Gamer is devoted to telling you about screen games, however they are delivered to your screen, so it's a natural step for us to start telling you about the incredible number of screen games for computers – around 2500 now available in the shops.

It's a whole new world out there with games challengingly complex, breathtakingly graphic and mindblowingly convoluted – and we're going to tell you about them in the coming issues of TV Gamer. That's not to say that we are about to forget the games-only systems – there's still plenty happening there, too.

So, whether you have a VCS or a VIC 20 we'll have details of the latest games for you.

For instance in this issue David Bishop comes to the rescue of Pitfall players lost in the jungle of 256 scenes with news of a clever short-cut. Meanwhile Paul Whiffin tells how to build a massive score on Night Stalker.

For coin-op game fans, Andy Harris has been looking at the new and incredibly detailed laser-disc-fed arcade games which are so realistic that ordinary life seems dull by comparison. But for even more accurate realism we can only envy today's fighter pilots, says Mike Roberts, who describes what must be the most expensive game system in the world in our Sky Wars feature.

Our cover feature, Tanks a Lot, offers a listing of the tank games available on computers and game systems, was prompted by two incredible new cartridge games, *Battlezone* from Atari and *Robot Tank* from Activision.

This month's computer spot is taken by the new Atari 600XL, with a listing of the games you can expect to play on it and a frank look at its game-playing prowess. If the 600XL seems like the machine for you, why not enter our 600XL competition on page 26?

Incidentally, on our news pages we mention the new Mitsubishi printer – not yet available in the UK, and likely to be quite pricey for the gamer's pocket when it does eventually arrive. If, in the meanwhile, you want to prove you've had a high score why not borrow an SLR auto-exposure camera, put it on a tripod, shoot at 1/4 second using a cable-release gadget for a rock-steady picture? With this arrangement, you can get a very good picture of a fairly slow-moving or still bit of screen graphics. It's a good way of showing us your easter egg puzzlers, too. Even if you can't prove your high score, write in and let our Darrin know your best score – he will be publishing a list of champs in the club section in later issues.

John Sanders

REVIEWERS REQUIRED
We need more reviewers for the following systems:- G 7000, ORIC, DRAGON, AQUARIUS.
Please write to TVG, 187 Oxford Street, London W1

TV GAMER

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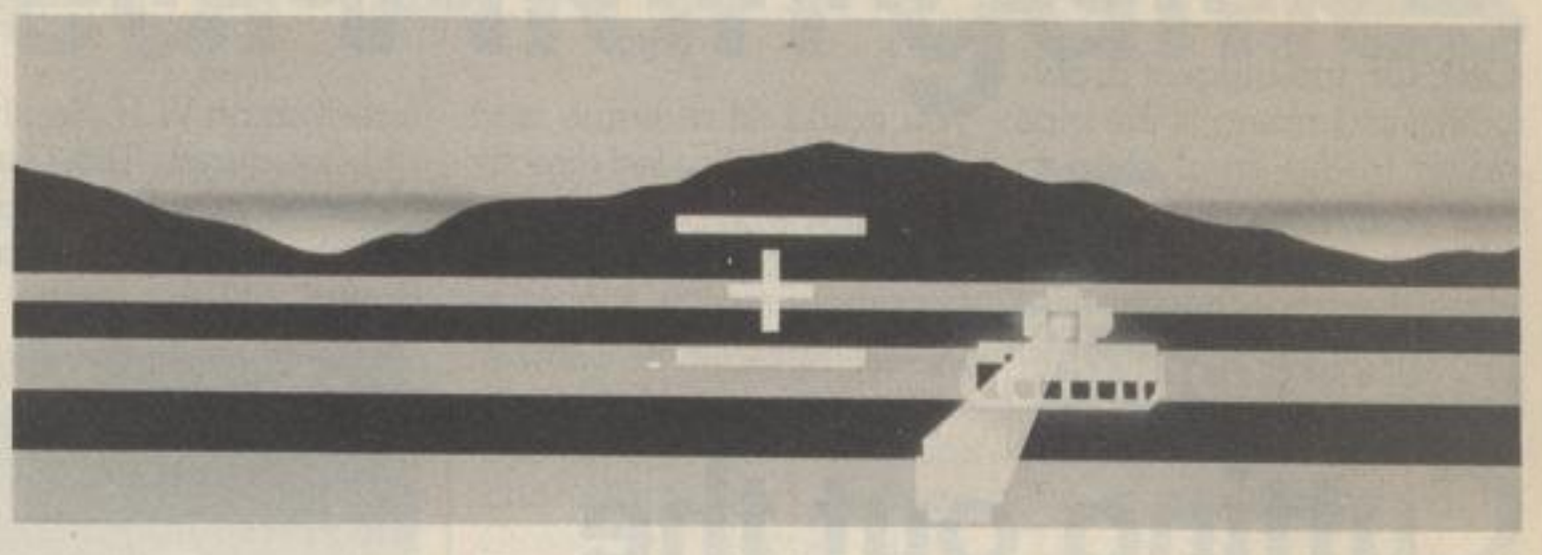

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Taking time out from outer space, we beam down to earth for tank-based battle games, with a survey of tank games.

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New it isn't, but this intriguing Mattel maze is still adding new addicts, so perhaps they'll be relieved that assistance is at hand, in the form of PAUL WHIFFIN who shows you how to zap the robots, spiders and other meanies.

Pitfall 28
Harry, the hero of Pitfall, has a total of 256 jungle screens to negotiate before he can collect enough money bags, gold and silver bars, and diamond rings to make it worthwhile braving the crocs, scorpions, fires and death pits that lie in wait. DAVE BISHOP shows you how Harry can make it.

Mr Do 64
Life is just a bowl of cherries for Mr Do – or it would be, if the Bad Guys would let him pick them from the cherry orchard, not to mention the Alpha Monster and the Blue Choppers. High scorers will cherish (sorry!) the DAVE TRUTZENBACH guide to the eight screens and beyond.

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Inside the new XL generation of computers, we find there's a lot of power, plus a keyboard that really works. We take the lid off while not baffling you with the scientific jargon. Don't you wish all hardware reviews were written this way?

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After its frenzied fictional role as space weaponry, the laser finds a real-life existence as the technology behind some of the finest video graphics you've ever seen. ANDY HARRIS spits on his hands and climbs into the cockpit of two of the most realistic ones.

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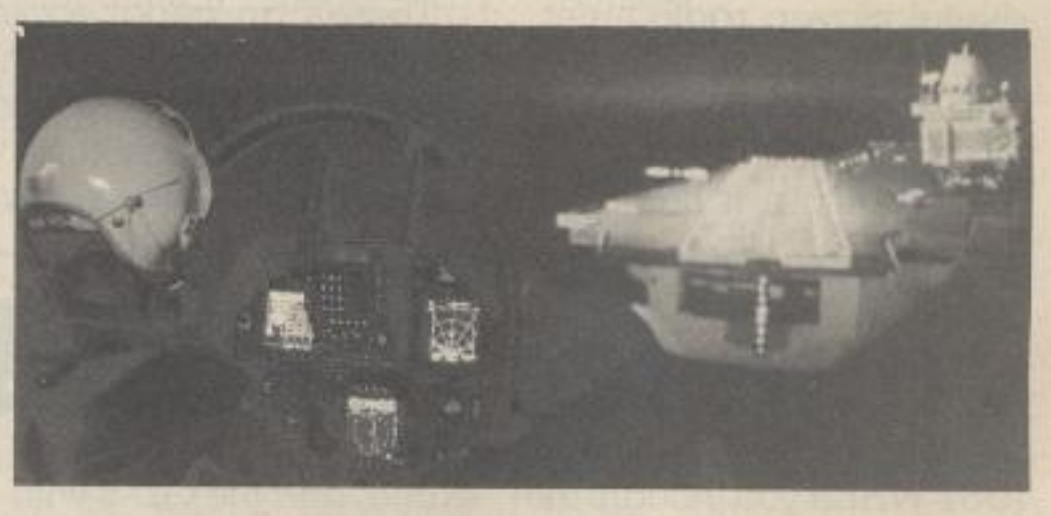
Sky wars 34
These games are deadly serious, as today's Biggleses throw themselves about a computer-generated sky, without endangering a million quids' worth of jet fighter. Plus some dazzling full-colour pictures of what it feels like to be in the cockpit.



THE TV GAMER AWARDS

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To guide you in filling in the nominations card inserted in this issue, here are 16 pages of reviews of the TV games of the year, listed alphabetically from Action Force to Z-Tack, complete with details of prices and the systems they play on.

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Games in the pipeline

ONE OF the biggest drawbacks in gaming is the trips down to the local shop to buy your games. It's nearly always raining and more often than not they've sold out. Wouldn't it be nice if you could sit at home and have the games fed directly to you?

Well very soon this could become a reality, thanks to cable television. Newsagent chain W.H. Smith are due to launch The Games Network, a cable TV channel beaming TV games down fibre optic or ordinary cables to subscribers' television sets. Gamers will be equipped with a cable decoder, which will unscramble the signals, and a computer terminal for game selection and playing.

Access to the Games Network database will be achieved by keying in a personal access code number. And the terminal will be a 64k machine so it should be capable of handling some very exciting games. *TV Gamer* will be looking into the world of cable TV games in greater detail in future issues.

Cutting out the video/computer rivalry

IF YOURS is one of the growing number of families with a home computer *and* a video, a new gadget from Akai could help you avoid countless family rows.

Touted rather grandly as the ultimate "marriage between TV and hi-fi", it is, basically, a high quality amplifier with sockets for almost everything electronic you might have around the home, including TV, two VCRs, a record player, audio cassette recorder, compact disc, digital player, radio tuner, and video disc player.

We counted 35 sockets on the back!

In addition, it has a 4in black-and-white TV screen, the main purpose of which is to monitor the picture when you're copying from one of your two VCRs to the other – always assuming, of course, that you're one of those plutocrats with more than one video!

The company are saying that it can also be used for connecting a computer or games machine, and of course they're right, but it seems like something of an afterthought: there's no socket dedicated to computer use, such as Akai's rivals, Sony, have fitted to their latest TV.

There's an aerial socket (marked "antenna", in the usual US-Japanese fashion) which could be used for a computer, or if your computer produces separate video and audio signals you could get a lead made up, which isn't difficult.

The actual amplifier is of acceptable quality. It has 22 watts of music power per channel, which is enough to drive average size speakers, but it is hardly the best available. And if colour wasn't important, a games player might be satisfied with using the 4in monitor, while the rest of the family watched broadcast TV.

The player won't have sound, of course, since the monitor has no loudspeaker, but there is a headphone socket.

At £250, it's not cheap, but it's also good value for money. If it really avoids those family rows, it could be a case of peace at any price.

Texas basics

TEXAS INSTRUMENTS, makers of the TI/99-4A home computer, have just released a series of four book/cassette combinations, designed to teach home computing and games writing to old and young alike.

The four packs, entitled Basic Starter packs 1 and 2 and Games Writer 1 and 2, take the user from first time basics (forgive the pun) right through to serious games inventing and writing. Each pack is to cost £9.95 and consists of a 128-page book and a cassette containing demonstration programs as well as games.

Despite their withdrawal from the home computer market, TI assures us that their games programs will continue to appear as promised.

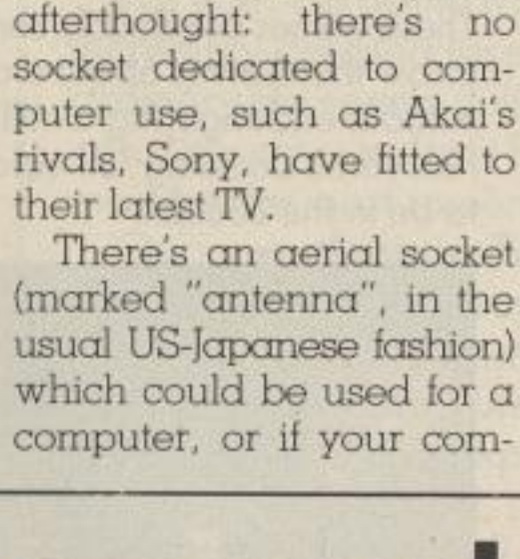
Time for games!

JUST WHEN you thought the Japanese had put on to a watch everything possible short of a video recorder, teasmade or lawnmower, Casio have come up with a series of watches with built-in games.

Pictured is the Casio GG-9 which as well as having all the conventional features of a digital watch also boasts a built-in golf course. As you can see it has fore modes (couldn't resist that one).

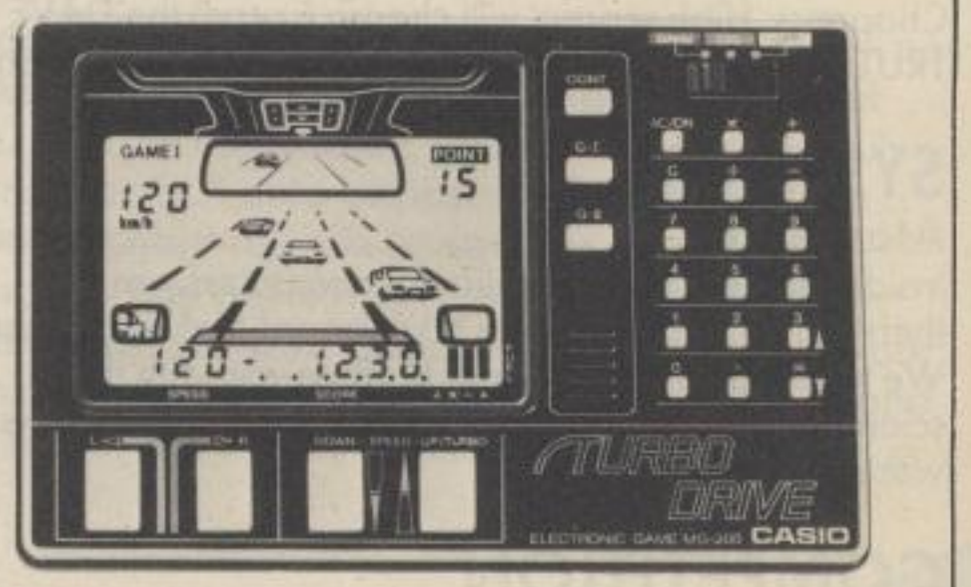
Games watches in this series include the GS-11, incorporating a soccer game, and the GD-8 with a driving game.

Meanwhile, after the calculator that played games, now take a look at the game that also calculates. Casio



– again – have launched a range of electronic handheld LCD games that have as a bonus a built-in calculator. The one you see here is the Casio MG-200 (also known as Turbo Drive), a quite complex driving game featuring not one but three rear view mirrors.

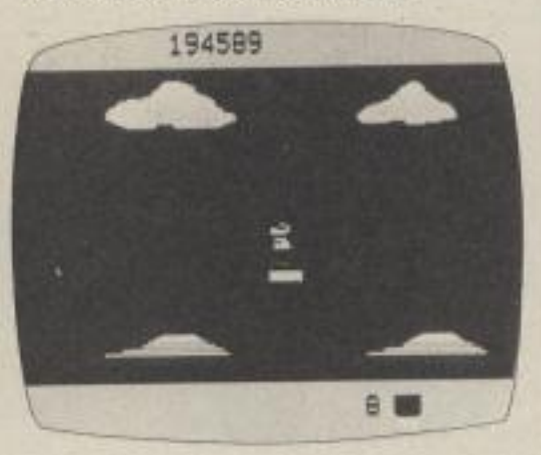
Other titles include Soccer and Astro Chicken (don't ask us to crow on about that one!).



New year Atari games

ATARI'S VCS releases for the first quarter of 1984 are primarily games for younger gamers, although there are one or two new arcade titles as well.

Moon Patrol



Snoopy vs the Red Baron

Two successful Williams coin-ops are now Atari VCS games, namely Moon Patrol and Joust. All the other games to emerge during the next few months will be based on popular children's characters from Sesame Street, the Muppet Show, Peanuts, and Walt Disney films.

These titles include Pigs in Space, Snoopy vs the Red Baron, Donald Duck's Speedboat Chase and Asterix the Gaul.

Donald Duck's Speedboat Chase

Space Cobra

THE LATEST thing in table-top games from Bandai UK Ltd is Space Cobra, an arcade-style sci-fi shoot 'em up which utilises not one but two different screens side by side, distinguishing it from the other double screen games around.

The game starts off with the player defending the Space Cobra base from the merciless enemies out to bop him one. The second screen contains a maze that must be negotiated in order to win. All looks like good stuff.

Atarisoft for other computers

NOT CONTENT with making games for their own systems, Atari are now branching out into producing software for other leading brands of computer.

Atarisoft announces it will begin by producing games software based on many of the popular arcade hits. Among these are to be Pac-Man, Defender, Centipede, Donkey Kong, Dig Dug, Robotron 2084 and the sequel to Defender, Stargate. These and other games will be available soon for such computers as the Vic-20, Commodore 64, TI99/4A.

Plans are also under way for games to fit the Sinclair Spectrum, the BBC Micro and the Dragon. Although Atarisoft are concentrating exclusively on games to start with (which after all is what they are best at), but they are planning educational and business software to follow later this year.

Computer that takes Coleco games

JUST BEFORE Christmas CK Computers released two computers made by Spectravideo, the people behind the Spectravision cartridge range and the Quick-Shot Joystick. Both computers are for different markets.

The SV-318 is aimed directly at the home user and gamer and the SV-328 is more home management/small business oriented although both will take the same software and have similar specifications.

Some interesting accessories are also expected for these computers, among them a Colecovision adaptor which will give access to an exciting range of arcade software. It might even be possible to interface the Coleco VCS adaptor to the Coleco adaptor which would give access to something like 200 games, which isn't a bad start for any computer.

Other peripherals will include a light pen and a modem as well as all the traditional add-ons such as tape and disk drives for program storage.

Hardcopy from your TV

GAMING TENDS to be a solitary sport, since it's difficult to show other people your success or disasters because everything is changing so fast.

Some of the latest computer games have a 'pause' facility, which is a great improvement, but what is needed is the ability to 'capture' a split-second event and preserve it for showing to your friends. You can always video tape everything you do, or have a camera standing by, or if you have a printer you could produce a screen-dump, as long as you have a 'pause' facility in the game and the screen-dump program you use doesn't corrupt the game itself.

Now there is a TV set with a built-in printer, will it do the trick? Unfortunately, no. The Philips 3890 produces good clear printing on heat-sensitive paper, but only of Teletext pages. Fine for Tele software, but no solution to the problem of games in progress.

However, Mitsubishi have now produced a printer which will 'capture' a single picture, even from fast moving action, and print it out for you. It uses heat-sensitive paper and the latest electronics. It's a free-standing box, and will print anything that can appear on the screen from a TV-broadcast programme, Teletext, computer or video game action or from a video recorder or video camera.

No price has yet been fixed but it is expected to cost around £300. Delivery won't be until 1985 at the earliest, but we will bring you a test of this very useful product as soon as we can.

Sony TVs and Intellivision

SONY MAKES Intellivision black and white! We had a call from a reader who had trouble with his new Intellivision – he couldn't get it to play in colour on his TV set, a 26in Sony.

He took it back to the shop and they tested it on a TV set: instant colour, as you'd expect. However, he insisted on a trial on the exact type of TV he had, so off they all trooped to the TV department, plugged it in and ... no colour.

He had proved his point. He and the shop contacted Mattel and confirmed that there is an occasional problem – an incompatibility between Intellivision and some large-screen Sony TV sets with auto tuning. It's apparently incurable, and you have to change one or the other.

He's now the happy owner of a VCS.

A very curious incident. We will continue to recommend and use Sony TVs – but suggest that if you have a large screen Sony with autotune, where possible make sure that games (or computer) work with it before buying them!

Adventure hand helds

GRANDSTAND, THE people responsible for table-top Astro Wars, are launching a series of pocket sized LCD adventure games. These are part of the "Big Screen" range which feature larger-than-average LCD displays and have more action built-in.

Grandstand are starting their launch with three titles: Tarzan, Swords 'n' Serpents (based on Imagic's Intellivision cartridge) and Jack and the Beanstalk (which is solar powered – good news if you don't like buying stacks of batteries). Other titles in this range will include Crazy Kong, Pocket Pac-Man, Pocket Scramble, Mini Munchman, King Kong Jungle, King Kong New York, Richman and Woodman.

With the exception of Jack and the Beanstalk, all the games come complete with watch-type batteries.

Earth-shattering software

NEW SOFTWARE company Mogul (launched back in November) now have no less than 13 game titles on offer for six different computers, namely the Spectrum, Commodore 64, Vic-20, Tandy TRS-80C, Oric and the T1/99-4A.

The range consists mostly of arcade look-alikes but has some reasonable adventure games, some of which have been designed to introduce would-be adventurers gently to this complex aspect of TV gaming.

Many people buy adventure games that are too complex to start off with, and this can put them off for life.

The first of this series, entitled Earthquake, has you and other shoppers trapped in an underground shopping centre after an earthquake. It's up to you to get yourself and everyone else out of there alive. Other titles in the Mogul range include Zeus, Pyramid and Vipers.

Ada

JUST BEFORE christmas, we were invited to CBS Coleco to see the only working Adam computer in the country and to have a go at some of the new software in the pipeline for March/April this year.

First, though: the Adam, or Expansion Module 3 as it's better known to gamers. The Adam system comprises three main elements: the memory module, the keyboard and the printer. The memory module is the real guts of the Adam, housing a 64k memory which, combined with the 16k of the Coleco, gives you 80k of RAM to play with. This gives the Adam tremendous potential for games – especially when you think of what can be achieved with a 4k Atari VCS.

Special tape drive

As well as the extra memory, this module also contains a very special tape drive, known as a stringy floppy. Basically, this is a digital tape recorder which plays back at a much faster speed than a conventional cassette player making it almost as fast as a disk drive. Also, the memory capacity on each single tape is 256k which makes it highly competitive with disks.

This module also contains several expansion interfaces for things like a memory board, as well as a space for a second tape drive.

The Adam we saw came with three tapes: one containing the computer language Smartbasic, one for storing programs, and a games cassette – Buck Rogers and the Planet of Doom. This game (based on the Sega coin-op) is a multi-phase Sci-Fi shoot 'em up par excellence featuring all the thrills of the coin-op.

The game loads up in sections so that while scene two is being played the computer is getting rid of scene one and loading in scene three. This greatly enhances the potential of the Adam as a games machine. Just think of the adventure games possible using this system. Plans are under way for tape versions of Donkey Kong and super Zaxxon.

Another attractive games feature is the permanent hi-score table which records the top ten hi-scores and the skill levels in true arcade style.

The keyboard has a 75-key sculptured, stepped design with a professional feel about it. At the top of the keyboard are six black keys that have different functions, depending on what is being used. Two controllers come with the Adam, one can be used as a cursor controller and the other as an accountant-style numeric keypad.

Surprising printer

Lastly, there's the printer which, surprisingly, is a daisy wheel and not a dot matrix or a thermal. Surprisingly because a printer capable of generating graphics would surely have been of more use to the gamer. That way there would be no more problems taking off-screen pictures. However Coleco have gone for the business-like printer in the hope that they will not only attract gamers but small businesses as well.

The Colecovision Adam add-on should be in the shops around Easter for about £450-£500. This may seem like a lot but it isn't really, considering what separate components for other computers cost to buy. I must admit I was very impressed with what I saw of the Adam, and I look forward to its launch in the not too distant future.

am update

Report by *Darrin Williamson.*

The complete Adam set up.

Coleco software previewed

We've also been given a sneak peek at some new carts to come from CBS Coleco. These are games to look for around Easter when you're out buying your Adam.

First up is Subroc, an air-

Subroc

sea battle with very impressive graphics. This game was known in the arcades as Subroc 3D, but the Coleco version is restricted to only two dimensions. It is, however, much more enjoyable to play than the coin-op because it is far easier to control.

Omega Race has taken a long while to get on to the home games systems although it has been available for the Vic-20 for quite some time. Unfortunately, the game does show its age slightly, especially when put next to something like Buck Rogers. The idea is to bounce around an outer space arena zapping various nasties that also inhabit the area you are in. The nice thing about this game is that it is both joystick and trak ball compatible.

Having said that, the next two carts we saw were both for use with the trak ball (or roller controller) exclusively. Slither comes packed with the roller controller. This is basically a hi-tech version of Centipede set in prehistoric times. The big

Slither

differences are that you have complete freedom of the screen and that the game is graphically superior to the Centipede coin-op.

Victory, according to the title screen, is based on a coin-op but we have never seen this game in the arcades. (If you have, let us know).

The idea is to fly along the landscape Defender-style, destroying aliens on the way. The aliens are trying to land and board quarks to make them more powerful. We thought that this was one of the best scrolling shoot 'em ups around.

Complex controller

In addition to the roller controller there's the super action controller which brings a whole new meaning to the word complicated. This controller consists of an eight-position joystick, a 12-button keypad, a speed roller which alters the difficulty of the game throughout play (acting a bit like a variable speed control on a video), and finally four action triggers which can be used in various combinations.

When launched in this country, it is planned to come with a soccer game which Coleco claims is very good indeed. The two sport games we saw, Baseball and Rocky (based on Rocky III), were exceptional.

Rocky

The graphics on both were some of the best we've seen on the Colecovision (and that's saying something).

In Rocky, you can choose to be Sylvester Stallone or Mr. T, then it's up to you to beat the pixels out of your opponent. Go for it! Baseball again has incredible graphics and has to be seen to be believed.

All in all quite a nice selection of software on offer for the Coleco gamer.

As your childre
so can your

600XL Home Computer.

If you're buying a home computer then you've probably got one major worry. That your children will soon grow out of the system you buy.

With the new ATARI 600XL™ you need have no such fear. Because the ATARI 600XL was not just designed as a home computer, it's designed to build into a complete computer system.

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Program Recorder. The inexpensive way to store extra programs, and use the unique Atari sound-through system.

64K Memory Module. Increase the memory from 16K RAM to a massive 64K RAM. Important, as the more memory it has the more it can do.

Touch Tablet. Creates complex on-screen graphics by allowing you to draw on the TV screen.

Trak Ball™ Controller. For a better and more sophisticated arcade style game control.

ren get bigger
Atari 600XL.

Program Recorder.

64K Memory Module.

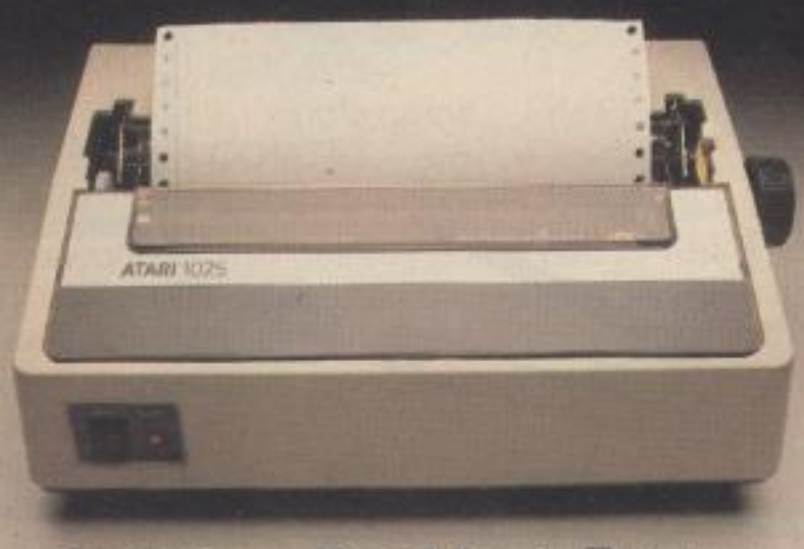
Touch Tablet.

Trak Ball™ Controller.

Super Joysticks.

Colour Printer.

Disk Drive.



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Super Joysticks. Gives you a greater competitive edge over your games.

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Of course, you won't need them all now. Your children have first got to learn to master the computer itself. But when they have, and believe us they will, the ATARI 600XL can handle it.

For more details write to: Atari International (UK) Inc., P.O. Box 407, Blackhorse Road, London SE8 5JH.

The new Atari XL home computer system.

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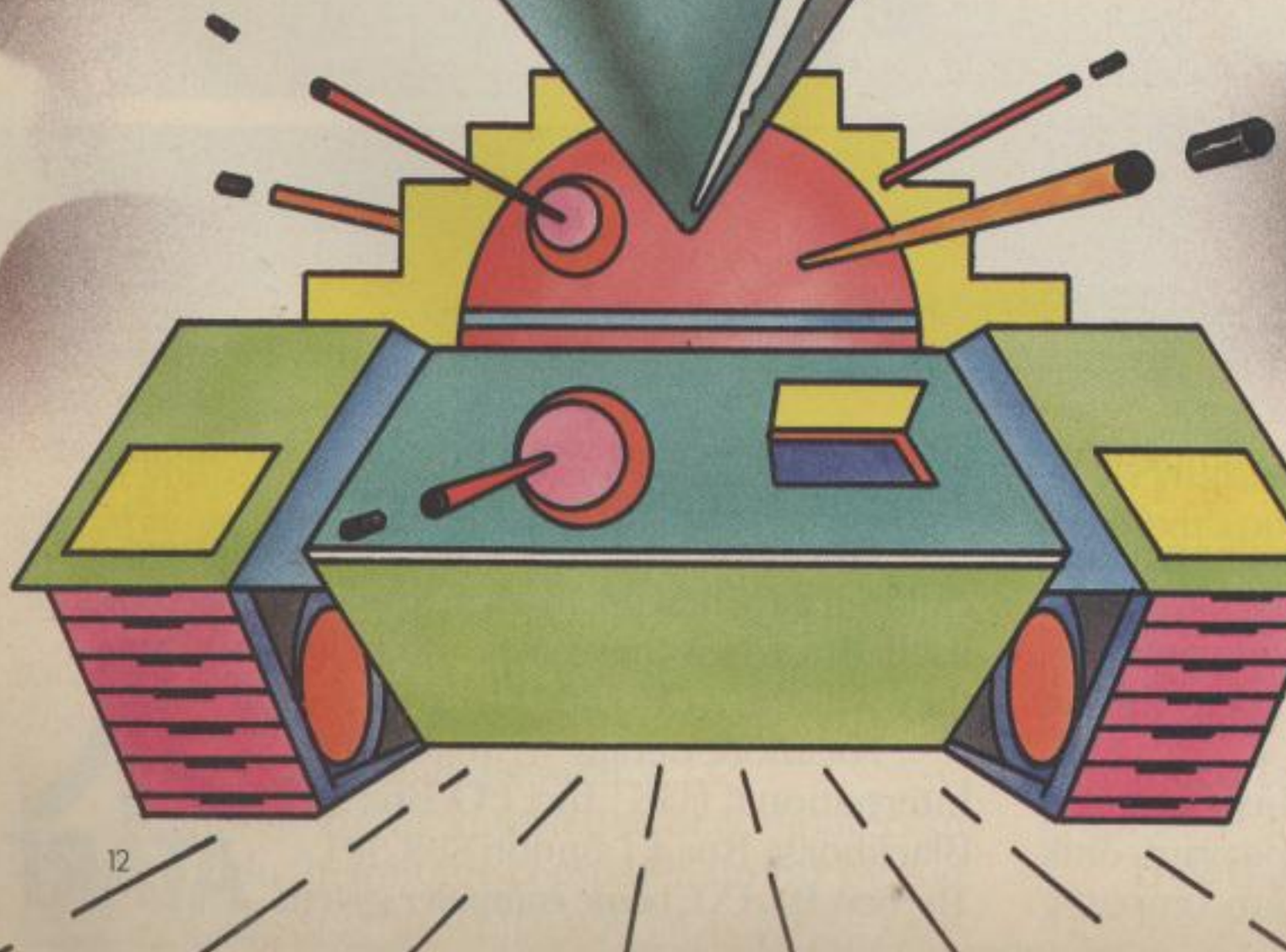
TANKS A LOT!

Since Atari released their Combat cartridge, the tank battle game has really gone from strength to strength. In arcades Atari's Battlezone proved to be a winner so naturally enough home games soon followed suit, with tank battles turning up on VCS and soon to appear for Vectrex. So here for all you tank gamers is a list of those we've already tested, plus a brief description of Thorn-EMI's new Tank Commander cartridge.



ARMOURED ASSAULT

SPECTRAVISION
COLECOVISION £19.95
1,1v1 8 variations

Armoured Assault is a Combat-type game, but with slightly better graphics. The big difference is that you have limited ammunition and can shoot through the various obstacles in your path. Other than that, it's just Combat revisited and will probably only appeal to those homesick for their trusty VCS. However, bearing in mind the price, this game is probably worth getting for nostalgia's sake. *Value 3, Graphics 2, Sound 2, Game play 2.*

ARMOUR ATTACK

MB ELECTRONICS 8124
VECTREX £19.95
1,2 2 variations
COMBAT SHOOT 'EM UP

This is basically the Vectrex answer to Atari's Combat cartridge, although it's been updated for the 80s. The enemy has overrun your city, most of your army has been slain, and you're alone in an armoured jeep equipped with missiles. The enemy tanks and helicopters have been alerted to your position and are on their way in groups of two, three, or more, with guns blazing. The two-player version, which needs an additional £25 controller available from Vectrex stockists, is even better. In this you are pitted against the tanks and 'copters as a two man team with two jeeps. A must for all those who enjoyed playing Atari Combat. *Value 3, Graphics 3, Sound 3, Game play 3.*

ARMOR BATTLE

MATTEL ELECTRONICS 1121
INTELLIVISION £21.95
1v1
COMBAT

The idea of this game is to outshoot your opponent over different battleground scenes. The computer selects at random from over 240 battlefields, so the scenes vary from game to game. Each player has two tanks per battlefield, and the first one to lose 50 tanks loses the war. The game can be shortened by both players agreeing on fewer tanks to be lost. To destroy an enemy tank it must be hit three times and each player can lay one invisible mine on each battlefield. The graphics are very good, the tanks change in perspective as they turn around and they can even hide in the trees.

This is a very good cartridge and is certainly one of the best of this type available. It is a pity though, that you cannot take on the computer if you are short of someone to play with. *Value 3, Graphics 4, Sound 2, Game play 2.*

BATTLEZONE

ATARI CX2681
VCS £29.95
1 single game
COMBAT

Thankfully Atari haven't tried to copy the coin-op (direct Vector to raster translations seldom work too well.) Instead of the wire-frame images you are given a cartoon like a rasterscan image. This features surprisingly good graphics.

All our old friends are there: the Enemy Tank, Supertank, Missile and the Saucer (still worth 5000 points). If you're hit by the enemy you get interference on the screen as if the Tank's video display unit had been disconnected.

All in all, this game runs rings round Combat. *Value 3, Graphics 4, Sound 2, Game play 2.*

COMBAT

ATARI CX2601
VCS £14.95
1v1 27 variations
COMBAT

This is the cartridge that comes with the console. It has 27 games each involving shooting down tanks, bi-planes or jet fighters. With the tank games you have to hit your opponent as often as you can within a certain length of time (2 minutes 16 seconds to be exact). There are variations such as invisible tanks and guided missiles which are played in a number of different mazes. The jets and bi-planes also have changes of formation involving two against two or one against three planes.

Initially the controls take some getting used to. Once these are mastered the game becomes a bit monotonous, which is not helped by the poor graphics. *Value 1, Graphics 1, Sound 1, Game play 2.*

FORTRESS OF NARZOD

MB ELECTRONICS 8132
VECTREX £29.95
1,1+1 3 variations
ADVENTURE SHOOT 'EM UP

You're in command of a futuristic military hovercraft-type vehicle. The objective is to take control of the Fortress of Narzod. To reach it you must climb three mountain paths, each one ending at a gate. The gates won't open until you've cleared three waves of creatures, namely Doomgrabbers and Tarantulas (each of which resemble Space Invaders) and Ghouls (which look like Dungarees). In later rounds, Warbirds (Phoenix Birds) swoop down and generally make your life a misery. The position of your craft determines where your bullet rebounds off the walls and if you're in the wrong position you can very easily shoot yourself – not a good way to go. Once you reach the Fortress you are confronted by the Mystic Hurler who is destroyed by no less than ten hits. Then you start again on a higher level.

One of MB's better Vectrex games with relatively easy-to-use controls. Experienced gamers will find it a constant challenge. *Value 4, Graphics 4, Sound 3, Game play 3.*

LABRINTH

GOLIATH 83-411
VCS £14.95
1,1+1 2 variations
COMBAT

Originally a ZiMag game called 'Tanks but no Tanks', you begin the game in a multi-coloured maze next to your base which you must defend by destroying the 20 tanks that attack from the top of the screen. Your task is to shoot them all before you use up your five lives or your base gets hit, whichever occurs first.

If you do manage to shoot down all 20 then you progress to the next level, which has different scenery and faster action, then to the third.

The two player version of this game is the same as game one except that you have alternate control of the tank. This is disappointing as there was scope here for a good two-player game in which you pit yourselves against the computer tanks.

The graphics on this game are adequate and certainly better than those of Atari's Combat. It should appeal to all those who still play Combat without getting bored. *Value 3, Graphics 2, Sound 2, Game play 3.*

ROBOT TANK

VCS £29.95
ACTIVISION £29.95
EAX 28-01
1 single game
COMBAT

Robot Tank, like Battlezone, is a search-and-destroy game pitting you against squadrons of enemy tanks. As with Battlezone, you are given a front view and a radar scope. However, there the similarity ends. Right from the word go you can see that Robot Tank (RT) is a graphically superior game thanks to Alan Miller's skilful programming. The enemy is much faster and looks more realistic than in the Atari counterpart. You also have damage indicators which let you know about any damage you may have received due to glancing hits.

The other bonus you get with RT is day/night and weather conditions that vary and affect your control. As with Millers' other creation, Starmaster, you have four pieces of equipment on your tank that can and frequently do fail. However, unlike Starmaster once the damage is done it is not repairable; there is no friendly Starbase to dock with.

All this makes RT much better than Battlezone both in terms of graphics and playability – in our view anyway. *Value 3, Graphics 4, Sound 3, Game play 4.*

ROMMEL'S REVENGE

CRYSTAL SOFTWARE £6.50
SPECTRUM
1 single game
COMBAT

The title suggests a World War Two type game but in fact this is one of the closest translations of Battlezone, the coin-op.

Crystal have done a good job at converting Vector graphics into raster graphics, making this without doubt the most faithful reproduction of the arcade game, even down to the active volcano in the background and the strange cubes and cones that have been omitted from all the other versions to date, which is strange as they do play an important part in the game.

Our one criticism is speed. The game is far too slow for the arcade gamer. There are options which allow you to switch off the volcano and the radar which do make it a bit faster but it doesn't make that much difference.

All in all this is a very good game for the Spectrum. It can be controlled either by keyboard or the Kempston joystick but won't work with the ZX interface 2. Ideal for those who like the coin-op but find it a bit too fast. *Value 3, Graphics 4, Sound 1, Game play 1, Arcade 4.*

TANK COMMANDER

THORN EMI
VIC 20 THC 22009 £29.95
1,1+1 2 variations

PREVIEW

Different both in appearance and concept to any of the other tank games reviewed. At first appearance Tank Commander looks like a simpler version of Mattel's Armor Battle (see separate review), however don't be decieved. The object of the game is to drive your tank through enemy territory on a mission to blow up their fuel dumps before the enemy tanks get to you. You have complete freedom of the screen but using the road in the centre of the screen is by far the easiest option provided your trigger finger is up to it.

REVIEWER'S CHOICE

TV Gamer's choice of the "best" tank game from those reviewed here are:
1 **Robot Tank** from Activision
2 **Battlezone** from Atari (both for the VCS)
3 **Rommel's Revenge** from Crystal Software (for the 48k spectrum).

The New Games

We've been looking at the latest games on sale now or soon to be released

ADVANCED DUNGEONS AND DRAGONS/ TREASURES OF TARMIN

MATTEL ELECTRONICS
INTELLIVISION £24.95
1 6 variations
ADVENTURE
Spring 84

This long-awaited follow up to Cloudy Mountain is scheduled for release early in the year. It sticks with the original format and also features several improvements. You now have a 3D perspective view of the maze and can pick up a multitude of weapons and treasures along the way.

The game seems to involve escaping from the island of Tarmin with as many treasures as possible. There are monsters a-plenty to keep you occupied and it's only when you confront the minotaur that you can escape from the island. Value 4, Graphics 4, Sound 2, Game Play 3.

ALIEN SWARM/ARENA

K-TEL
16/48k SPECTRUM £6.95
1 single game(s)

Not the most imaginative game around but nevertheless quite good value for money. Alien Swarm is a sort of Galaxian style shoot 'em up in which you have to destroy a fixed number of fighters in as few passes as possible. I found the game very playable. Arena has you controlling a little warrior with a shield used to deflect boulders being thrown in his direction. I found controlling this game a bit tricky as I invariably twisted my shield in the wrong direction. Graphics 3, Sound 2, Game play 3.

ANIMACTION

MB ELECTRONICS
VECTREX £29.95
1,1+1 1 function
UTILITIES
Requires Light Pen £29.95
Spring 84

This cartridge allows you to use pre-defined backgrounds with your own designs and animation, as well as allowing you to experiment with sprite graphics. You can construct up to 38 different frames using the powerful storage memory. Although a long way from giving average gamers the facility to produce their own Tron, this is a real breakthrough and gives you tremendous artistic fun. Value 4, Graphics 3.

BUZZ BOMBERS

MATTEL ELECTRONICS
INTELLIVISION £19.95
1,1+1 3 variations
SHOOT 'EM UP

The idea of this game is to squirt your spraycan at bumble bees that fly around waiting to be shot. If by any chance they land, a lump of honey-comb appears. This blocks your path. A humming bird flies on-sceen from time to time and hovers by one of the hives. Avoid shooting it as you will make it feel ill if you keep spraying it with insect repellent. You won't get any bonus if that happens!

Although a well presented game I couldn't really work up much enthusiasm for it. Value 2, Graphics 3, Sound 2, Game play 2.

CORRIDORS OF GENON

NEW GENERATION SOFTWARE
48k SPECTRUM
1 single game

This is a fairly straight-forward maze game which has you tramping through a circular maze avoiding a Q*Bert look-alike whilst trying to guess the code that opens locked doors. Quite a fun game but really requires the kempston interface for a joystick (the Sinclair one won't work) if you're going to get to the centre. Good graphics help. Graphics 4, Game play 4, Sound 2.

FROGGY

DJL SOFTWARE
48k SPECTRUM
1,1+1 single game

No prizes for guessing which coin-op this game is based on. Yes you've guessed it – good ol' Frogger.

Not a bad version of the game although better versions are available. Nevertheless good value for money if you are a fan of the coin-op. Graphics 3, Arcade 2, Sound 2, Game play 2.

FROGS 'N' FLIES

PREVIEW

MATTEL ELECTRONICS
ATARI VCS £9.95
1,2 single game
CHILDREN'S SKILL
Spring 84

You're a frog who's looking for juicy flies to eat. Sitting on another lily pad is another frog which can be human or computer controlled, depending on the game variation. As flies pass by, you and your opponent must leap and catch them with your tongue and land safely on each other's pad. You control the length of leap with the joystick. Too much and you'll land in the water which will waste valuable scoring seconds. Both day and night variations are included.

GRIDRUNNER

LLAMASOFT
ATARI
1 2 variations

You have been appointed defender of an orbital power station called the grid. You've basically got to blast the nasties that come hurtling down towards you. You also have the X/Y zappers after you. They periodically fire along the beam towards you.

In all honesty this game is really a trickier space-age version of Centipede II and will probably appeal to gamers who find Centipede too easy. Graphics 2, Sound 3, Game play 3.

INTERNATIONAL SOCCER

MATTEL ELECTRONICS
ATARI VCS £9.95
2 single game
SPORT
Spring 84

As the name suggests this is a video version of football which sets out to better Atari's Pele and Realsports Soccer.

As in Pele Soccer the screen scrolls vertically instead of being a bird's eye view with Lego-like players. The players are seen in greater detail than on Pele. In short if you fancy a bit of video soccer then go for this one – not only is it better than the Atari version but at a tenner it's also a lot cheaper. Value 4, Graphics 3, Sound 2, Game play 2.

IT'S ONLY ROCK 'N' ROLL/ TOMB OF DRACULA

K-TEL
48k SPECTRUM £6.95
1 single game(s)

It came as no surprise to hear that K-Tel had come up with a game based on the gamer becoming a rock star. It's only Rock 'n' Roll is the game. You are equipped with a band (which you can name), and a supply of happiness and money, which must be used wisely if

The New Games

you're to make it to the top and stay there for as long as possible.

You are given the chance to hire a manager, select tour dates, get record contracts etc.

Although the bulk of this game is text, you are allowed to see highlights of some of your concerts on request. There are also some nice humourous touches. I found this game a pleasant change from the usual adventure game.

The other side of this game is entitled Tomb of Dracula. This is another adventure but in a more classic vein. The idea is to find old Drac's treasure before you get clobbered too many times by slime pits, zombies or big D himself. Not one of the most complicated adventures around, but certainly an enjoyable one for the gamer who wants to start adventuring gently. Value 4, Graphics 2, Sound 2, Game play 3.

JET PAC
SINCLAIR
48k SPECTRUM £14.95
1,1+1 single game
requires ZX Interface 2

In my view this is one of the best cartridge games for the Spectrum currently available as it has both good graphics and a fairly original plot. The idea is to guide your little astronaut around the screen shooting nasties as you go. While he does this he must also assemble his space craft, fuel it up and take off in it. Bonus points can be obtained by picking up various treasures such as diamonds that fall from the sky (if only).

The layout of the screen is very similar to that of Joust so definitely a game for fans of that particular coin-op. I also found that the laserfire graphics were rather reminiscent of Defender (the coin-op).

In short this is as fast arcade-style game with good graphics. One to add to your collection. Value 3, Graphics 4, Sound 1, Game play 4.

MELODY MASTER
MB ELECTRONICS
VECTREX £29.95
1 single game
UTILITIES
Requires Light Pen
£29.95
Winter 83

This is currently the only Light Pen game around that doesn't demand your artistic talents. This one tests your musical qualities. Melody Master provides four different computer-generated instruments for you to play: flute, drums, and cymbals to mention but three. You can learn how to compose tunes and also play musical games. Value 3, Graphics 3, Sound 4.

MICRO MOUSE GOES DE-BUGGING
LOTHLORIAN
48k SPECTRUM
1 single game

The game starts and you see a short program on-screen with various letters and numbers flashing. These are characters that have been pinched by the bugs, who have stashed them away in little boxes in the four corners of the screen. You've got to guide the mouse round the maze of words, pick up the characters and put them back in the right places. If you put all the characters back in the right places the program runs and you are given a little graphic treat. Failure results in the program crashing and you losing the game.

This is a game with a difference that has been well thought out. Worth looking at for younger gamers. Graphics 3, Sound 1, Game play 3.

MR WIMPY
OCEAN SOFTWARE 48k SPECTRUM
1,1+1 single game

You've seen the game of the film, now play the game of the fast food joint; Mr Wimpy. There are two screens to this game. In the first, you have to rush ingredients from one side of the screen to the other whilst avoiding little nasties that try to pinch 'em. Having got four ingredients across you can go on to the next phase which is exactly like Intellivision's Burger Time. The only real difference being that the egg and hot dogs are replaced by cutlery. Not a bad game. Graphics 4, Sound 2, Game play 3.

PINBALL
MATTEL ELECTRONICS
INTELLIVISION £24.95
1,1+1 Single game
SKILL
Spring 84

Mattel's long-promised Pinball game is now set to emerge in the spring. In addition to the regular features found in most pinball games there are a number of different 'tables' which change when a certain target is hit. I've found four but I'm no pinball wizard and there may well be more (write and let us know). Out of all the TV pinball games around this one will probably have the most lasting appeal due to the variation in play. Value 4, Graphics 4, Sound 3, Game play 4.

SAFECRACKER
IMAGIC
INTELLIVISION
1 3 variations
SKILL

Not a game for the kinetically minded really but not one for Adventure gamers either. Something of a cross-breed between the two. The idea is to drive around city streets. You begin the game at your hideout in a '30s style car. You have to make your way to an Embassy where you must break in and get to the goodies in the safe. This can be done in two ways; either by blowing the door off or by trying to crack the combination. This is by far the best solution as blowing the safe attracts the attention of the local constabulary.

Having cracked the safe you must make a hasty getaway back to your hideout where you stash the loot and prepare to embark on another dishonest venture elsewhere in the metropolis.

Although quite a good game I found controlling it a bit of a pain. I also didn't quite understand the timescale used in the game. As I mentioned before, you're in '30s style car and yet you're stealing things like microfilm which definitely doesn't tally with the age of the cars. Value 3, Graphics 3, Sound 2, Game play 2.

SAM SPADE
SILVERSOFT
48k SPECTRUM
1,1+1 single game

Despite the title this game is nothing to do with Detective. It is in fact a version of the game Space Panic with a slight change of location. Instead of an astronaut in space you are now a builder on a series of girders. That however, is the only difference. I found that using the keys was tedious. A joy-stick is a much better idea. Graphics 3, Sound 1, Game play 3, Arcade 3.

The New Games

SAS ASSAULT
MICRO GEN
48k SPECTRUM
1 single game

This is your chance to join the elite SAS. The first side of the tape is a training mission which assesses whether you're up to it or not. You are equipped with a Magnum and a M16 rifle which you must use in order to survive the baddies that come at you. The game is mostly text but with a few graphic touches including views of corridors and attackers etc. In the second part of the game you have to use all your skill to rescue a diplomat from a farmhouse and get him back to the Embassy. I'm not sure how technically accurate this is, as I don't know many SAS men, but it is an interesting trial and error game. Graphics 2, Sound 1, Game play 3.

SPACE SHUTTLE
MATTEL ELECTRONICS
INTELLIVISION £28.95
1 5 variations
SCI FI SKILL
Requires Intellivoice Module price £49.95
Spring 84

If you've ever watched Space Shuttle launches on television have you ever thought to yourself 'That doesn't look so hard'? Mattel have and now they've brought out an official Space Shuttle cartridge. You have to pilot a shuttle

mission up into orbit where you repair satellites, refuel, and perform other such tasks. There are three different voices on this game; mission control's and your two co-pilots' who keep you informed of developments during the flight. A good space game for players who are a little tired of just shooting thousands of aliens and saving the universe every time they slot in a cartridge.

STAR TREK
SEGA
FOR ATARI VCS
£29.95
1 single game

The full title of this game is Star Trek Strategic Operations Simulator and is designed to be a training simulator for any Star Fleet captains who wish to take on a starship like the Enterprise. Originally this was a Vectorscan coin-op which was translated to its Rasterscan format very well.

The idea is to cruise round a sector of the galaxy zapping Klingon craft that either pick-on defenceless Starbases or the Enterprise itself. To help you in your battle you have quite an array of functions at your disposal (the joystick is used to the full on this game). Your screen is split up into three sections; a sector chart showing where everything is in relation to you, a front battle view and a series of three function indicators showing your shield, photon and warp strength. You can withstand Klingon fire until your shield strength is depleted at which point you are extremely vulnerable to phaser fire. Your only chance is to dock with a Starbase, which gives you an extra one of everything.

I found this a very enjoyable game indeed, bringing together the best elements of Battlezone and Star Raiders whilst remaining faithful to the arcade game. Well worth considering. Value 3, Graphics 3, Sound 3, Game play 4, Arcade 3.

THIN ICE
MATTEL ELECTRONICS
INTELLIVISION £24.95
1,1+1 single game
SKILL
Spring 84

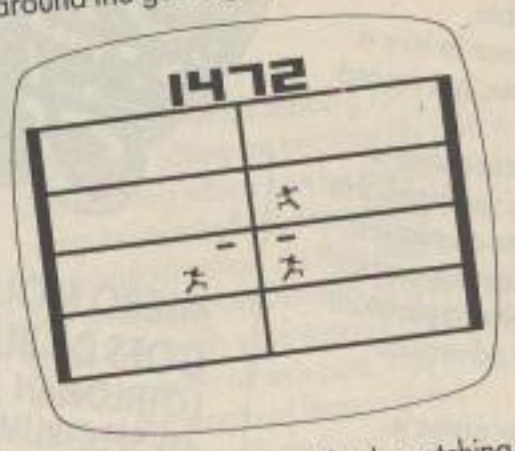
This game was originally called Arctic Squares and is sometimes listed in catalogues under this name.

You're a fairly senior penguin, on a frozen lake somewhere in the Arctic. You have to keep baby penguins under control (they're constantly misbehaving) by circling them on skates. This causes that section of ice to sink giving the rebels concerned an icy dunking. Red seals, polar bear-cubs and Arctic bunnies come to their rescue and try to bounce you off the screen. Great graphics and catchy music help to make this original idea work very well. Value 4, Graphics 4, Sound 4, Game play 3.

TRON – DEADLY DISCS
MATTEL ELECTRONICS
ATARI VCS £12.95
1 single game
MOVIE TIE-IN SHOOT 'EM UP
Spring 84

Based on the Walt Disney film, which was the first to use high resolution computer graphics in some of the scenes. This particular game is based on the disc battles that Tron and the other captured progams had to go through.

You control the little blue Tron figure around the game grid, avoiding the



Red Warriors' discs whilst despatching them with yours. The game looks deceptively simple at first, but in fact is very challenging.

WINTER OLYMPICS
MATTEL ELECTRONICS
INTELLIVISION £25.95
1,1v1 2 variations
SPORT
Spring 84

The official video game for the 1984 Winter Olympics in Sarajevo. It features two events: Ski Jumping and Bobsleigh running, which you must win in order to take the gold medal home.

How good is the game?

TV Gamer's panel of game players has assessed the games reviewed here on a scale of increasing value from 0 to 5. While these assessments are only a personal opinion, we hope they will help readers to plan their purchase of future games.

The five areas covered are value for money, quality of graphics, quality of sound, quality of gameplay, and fidelity of arcade transfer (where applicable). Naturally, TV Gamer ratings are only given to games we have actually played. So some new games which we haven't yet been able to fully review will not have these assessments. □

PREVIEW

NIGHT STALKER

Paul Whiffin takes a closer look at Mattel's intriguing maze game and examines ways of outwitting the spiders, bats and other marauding meanies!

This game has been one of the mainstays of the Mattel system since its introduction. And the fact that this game is still selling steadily is proof of its continued appeal.

For those of you who have had the misfortune not to have played this excellent game, here is a brief synopsis of the play.

In the centre of a maze your little man has a hideout. Here you are safe (at least in the early stages of the game) from marauding robots, which are "born" in the bottom left-hand corner of the screen. To destroy these robots there are guns hidden in various parts of the maze which you can use.

Unfortunately each gun only holds six shots. Whenever there are no more shots left in the gun you have, a gun symbol flashes showing where the next gun may be picked up. There are a limited number of places in the maze where guns are hidden, but you can never really be sure where the next gun will appear.

As your score increases, the robots become more intelligent, more persistent and more difficult to kill. This continues the challenge of the game right up to the most difficult stages.

Lurking in the maze are other creatures, which although not deadly, make life more dangerous as they can paralyse you for a couple of seconds.

SPIDERS

There is a spider which emerges from the web in the top left-hand corner and crawls persistently around the maze, turning up in the most awkward situations and making a nuisance of himself.

He is worth 100 points if you shoot him, but then a new one will appear immediately from the web if you do.

BATS

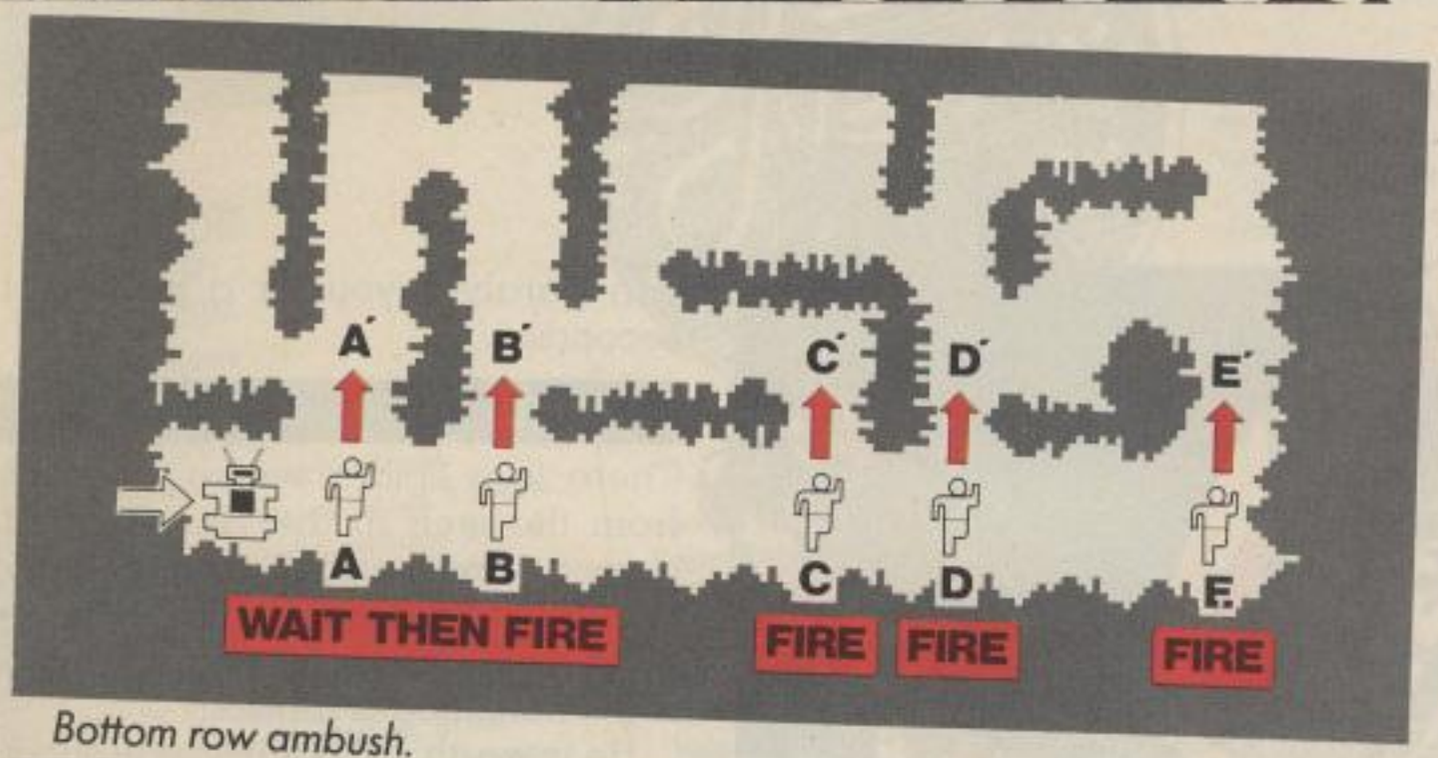
A couple of bats flap round the maze at a somewhat higher speed, and, if they touch your man, a paralysing effect occurs. This can be decidedly inconvenient if there is a bullet-firing robot in the vicinity! The bats are born in the top righthand corner of the maze. It is worth noting that they keep still (presumably asleep) for the first few seconds of their lives. This means that with practice you can nip backwards and forwards between them and be given sitting targets at 300 points each.

They are born fairly close together, so this method allows you to clock up easy points in the opening stages of the game. Unfortunately after you have made 5000 points, this easy prey is replaced by a grey robot.

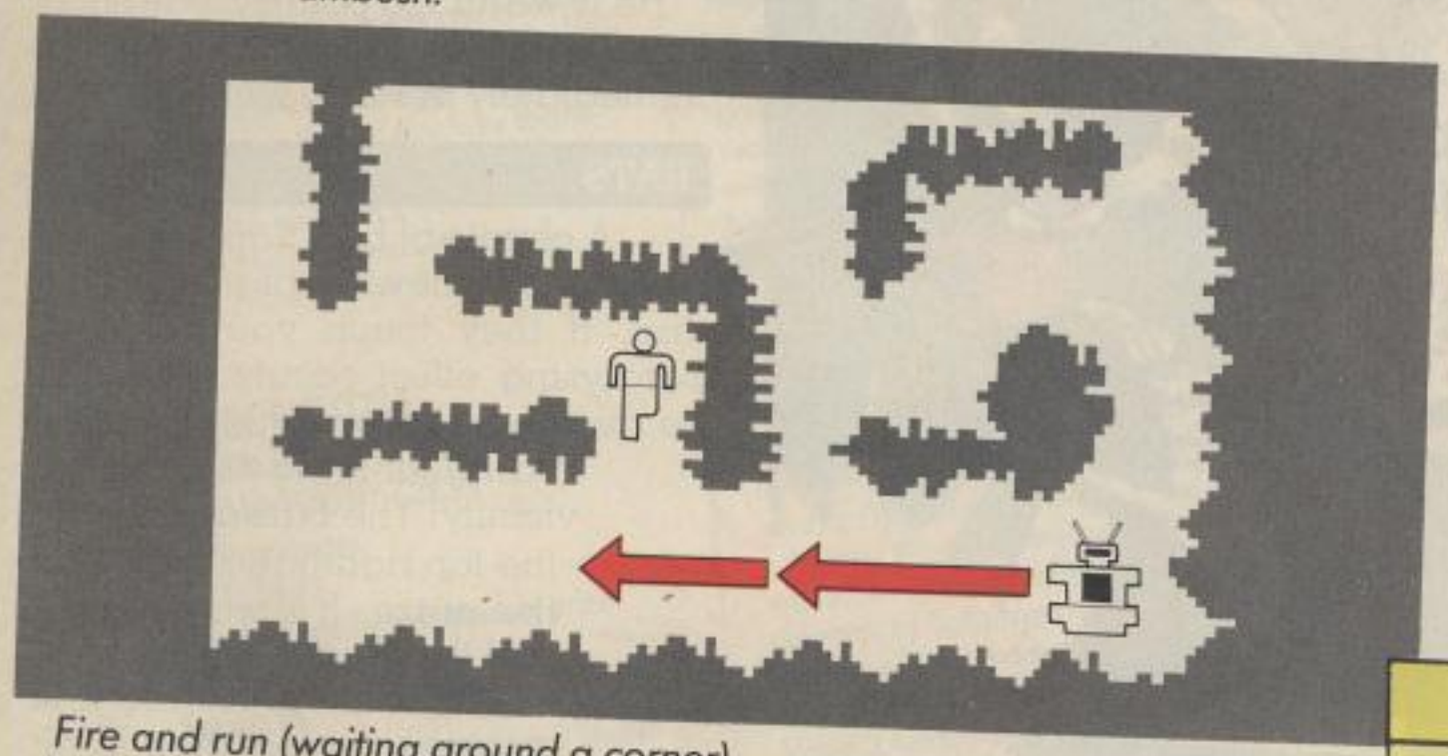
STRATEGIES

The most vital thing to do is to count your bullets. Remember each gun only carries six, and when you have fired off your last shots, you are defenceless until you can get to the next flashing gun (which can be decidedly tricky). Always use your last shot to destroy the most aggressive robot on the screen (whenever possible) or at least to cover your run to the next gun.

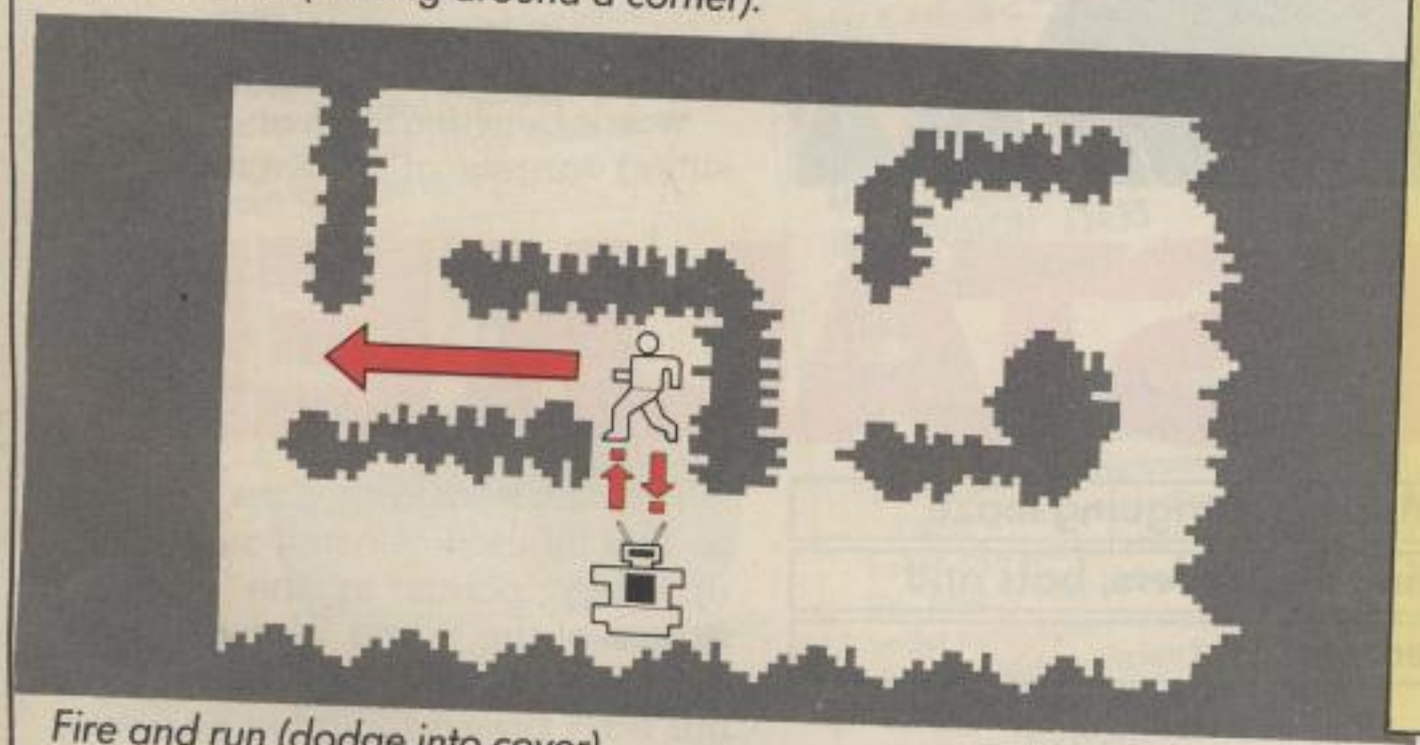
Several points are worth bearing in mind. Another bullet cannot be fired until the previous one has buried itself in the maze wall: no



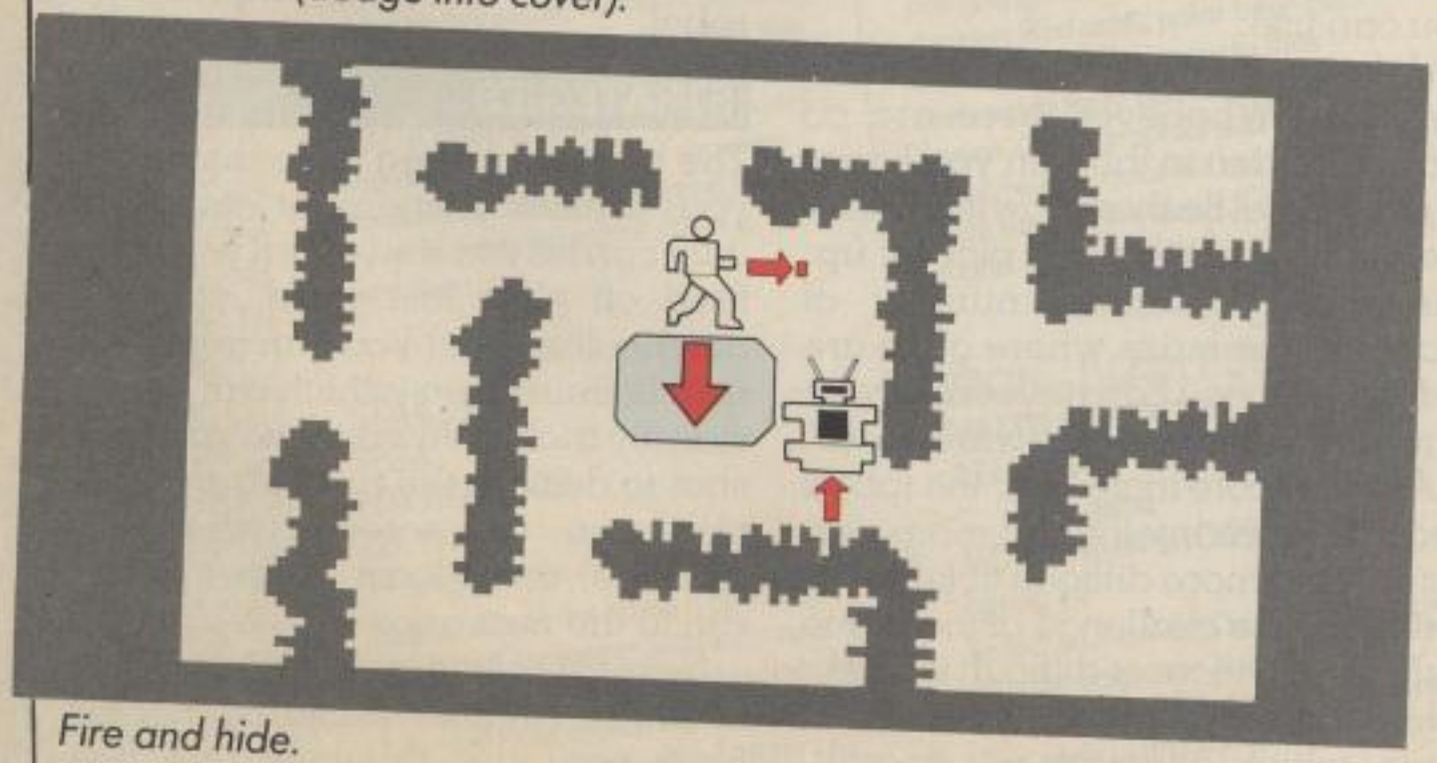
Bottom row ambush.



Fire and run (waiting around a corner).



Fire and run (dodge into cover).



Fire and hide.

hails of missiles in this game!

While this might seem a disadvantage, it can really be made to work for you, for the same principle applies to the robots. Even if there are three on screen (the maximum), there can only be one robot bullet and one human bullet in flight at any given moment.

The bullets travel quite slowly in comparison to many other games, but they are still much faster than the robots or your little man. If you can persuade a robot to fire a bullet along one of the long maze tunnels (top and bottom), then you have him at your mercy until the bullet reaches the far wall.

THE BOTTOM ROW AMBUSH

As new robots appear at the bottom left of the screen, it is possible to pick them off before they have a chance to dodge by using the Bottom Row Ambush. To set yourself up for this ambush, destroy a robot (preferably with your first bullet, i.e. just after you have picked up a new gun) within easy reach of the bottom row, if not actualy on it. According to your position (see picture), time your bullet to coincide with the replacement robot's appearance. You must immediately move to one of the positions marked A to E so you can dodge the bullet the robot will immediately fire (unless there is one

SPECIFICATION

NAME:	NIGHT STALKER
SUPPLIER:	MATTEL ELECTRONICS
PRICE:	£19.95
FORMAT:	INTELLIVISION
RATINGS:	Value 3
	Graphics 4
	Sound 3
	Game play 3.

Continued on page 62

TOP 20 videoGames

As monitored by TV Gamer readers

1	DONKEY KONG (CBS Electronics)
2	RIVER RAID (Activision)
3	PITFALL (Activision)
4	ZAXXON (CBS Electronics)
5	DEFENDER (Atari)
6	ENDURO (Activision)
7	Q*BERT (Parker)
8	BURGER-TIME (Mattel)
9	VANGUARD (Atari)
10	PAC-MAN (Atari)
11	DEMON ATTACK (Imagic)
12	RAIDERS OF THE LOST ARK (Atari)
13	LOCK N' CHASE (Mattel)
14	ADVANCED DUNGEONS AND DRAGONS (Mattel)
15	SCRAMBLE (MB/Vectrex)
16	SUPERCOBRA (Parker)
17	POPEYE (Parker)
18	MINESTORM (MB/Vectrex)
19	BATTLEZONE (Atari)
20	TURBO (CBS Electronics)

TOP GAMES OF THE MONTH

You are invited to vote for your favourite Video game (for VCS, Vectrex, Coleco, Intellivision, Philips etc), your favourite Computer game (for BBC, Spectrum, ZX81, Oric, Atari 400/600/800, TI-99, VIC 20, Dragon, Commodore 64 etc.) and your favourite Arcade game. But remember to vote only for those games that you own, have rented or have played a great deal.

To register your vote, fill in the reply-paid card on this page. It will also serve as your nomination for the best game of 1983 (see page 38 for details). One lucky voter will receive a free year's subscription to TV Gamer (decided by draw). If the winner is already a subscriber, the free subscription will begin when the present one ends.

GAME INPUT

KEYBOARD - Full Stroke, Nice Keyboard, 62 keys.

CASSETTE - Yes, but restricted to Official Atari Program Recorder, price £49.95

CARTRIDGE - Yes, max capacity 16k.

DISC -Yes, Official Atari Drives only, price £299.99

TELESOFTWARE COMPATIBLE - No

TECHNICAL INFO

MEMORY - 16K ROM (operating System + ATARI)

CPU - 6502C microprocessor. Clock Speed 1.79 MHz

GRAPHICS - 11 Graphic Modes. Max Resolution 320 x 192. 5 Text Modes. Max text display 40 columns x 24 lines. 256 Colours (128 displayable at any one time).

SOUND - 4 CHANNELS 3 OCTAVES

INPUT/OUTPUT - Cartridge slot TV, monitor output, 2 controller ports, Tape/Disc port, expansion interface.

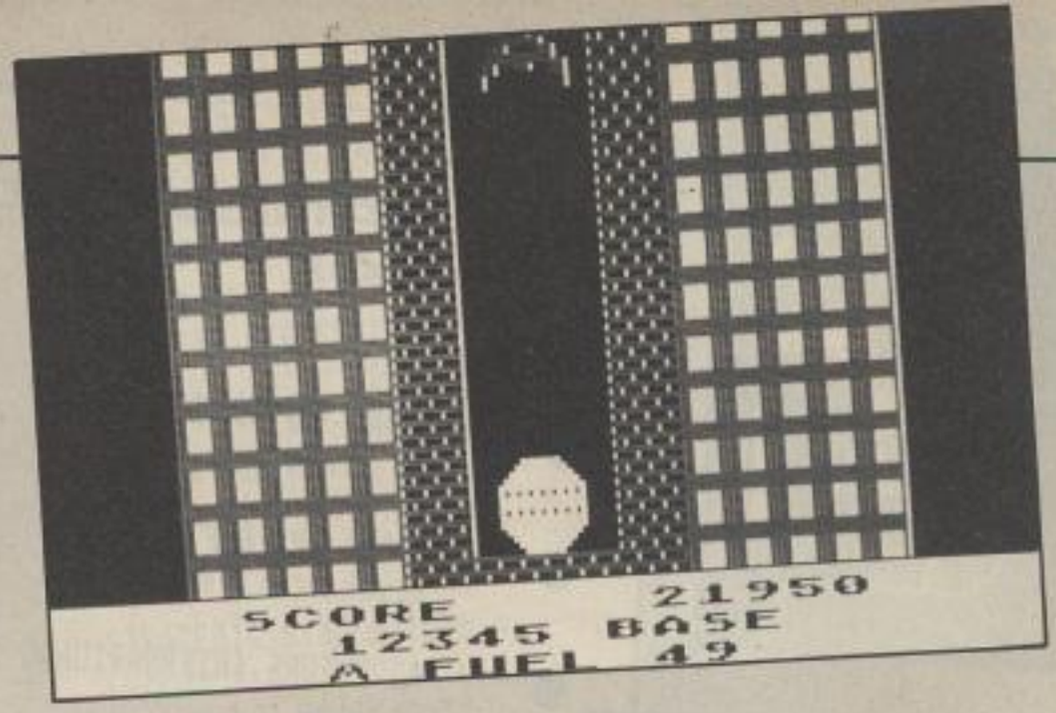
ATARI 600XL

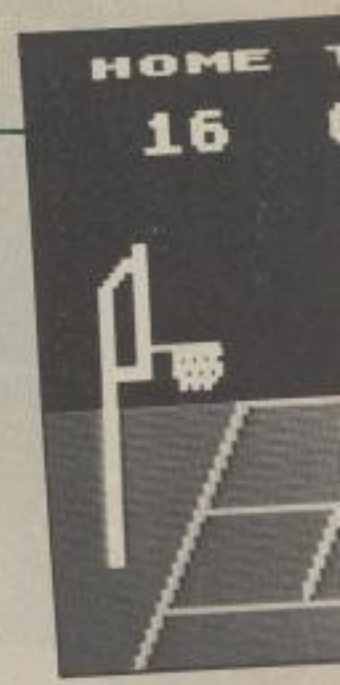
The 600XL is the first of a new generation of games computers from Atari. And with its compact size and touch-sensitive keyboard, it looks set to challenge the competition with real style. *Darrin Williamson* reports.

The first of Atari's new range of XL computers, the 600, is set to supersede the Atari 400, best remembered for its thump-sensitive keyboard. Although both the 400 and the 800 have done very well, a new series was needed in order to keep up with competition. So the 600 and 800XL were born.

There are only really a few main differences between the old and the new Ataris, the most obvious one being size, as the new computers are much more compact than the old. The 600 is about the same size as a Vic-20, while the 800 is a bit deeper. The 600 has a full-stroke keyboard which is a very welcome feature if you've ever had to type using the 400 keyboard. The 600 also has a built-in Basic, which is far more convenient than having it on cartridge; besides I never find much of a use for the Atari Memo Pad (the built-in program in the 400/800). The 600XL has also been given a new key, common to all the XL computers: the HELP key, which unfortunately is nowhere near as helpful as it sounds, as very little software is around that utilises its function.

Included with the 600XL is an RF lead, all the relevant manuals and booklets and a power supply which gets my "Brick of the Year" award for thunderingly large transformers. Accessories include all Atari-compatible controllers available, as





well as the recently released touch tablet which is a small graphics tablet, extremely useful for cartridges like Paint, which is an artist's sketch-pad program (price £69.99, £29.99 for cassette).

There is also a memory module available which will give the 600 a 64k memory which will in theory allow any piece of Atari computer software to be played. This will set you back another £90.

Data recorder and disk drives are also around as well as a range of printers ranging from an 80-column dot matrix printer to a 4-colour pen plotter (great for drawing graphics, charts etc).

With the Atari 600XL, you get the best of both worlds: an up-to-date micro, capable of playing very sophisticated games as well as being able to reproduce arcade titles exceptionally well. However, the real asset is the fact that software written for the old 400/800 is compatible, which gives you a software list in thousands rather than hundreds.

There is unfortunately a snag, as not all the software does actually work on the XL range. Although most does, there is a worrying percentage that won't work. In an independent survey conducted by Silica Shop Ltd, it showed that Atari's little claim of complete compatibility is not altogether true. We have published this list for you, along with a near complete games list at the end of this review.

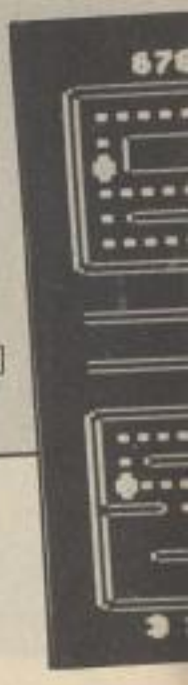
The Atari 600XL costs £160, which gives you a 16k computer. At first appearance this may seem like a bad deal. However, the graphic capabilities of the machine, along with the wealth of software and peripherals available, sets the 600 above the competition on the computer market.

Potentially, however, the Colecovision is still a better bet bearing in mind that Coleco carts can store 32k whereas Atari 600/800 carts can only handle 16k maximum.

Despite this, Atari's version of Donkey Kong is better than Coleco's so maybe it is not how much memory you have, it is how well you use it.

CONCLUSION

This machine is, without doubt one of the best games machines on the market in this price range. □

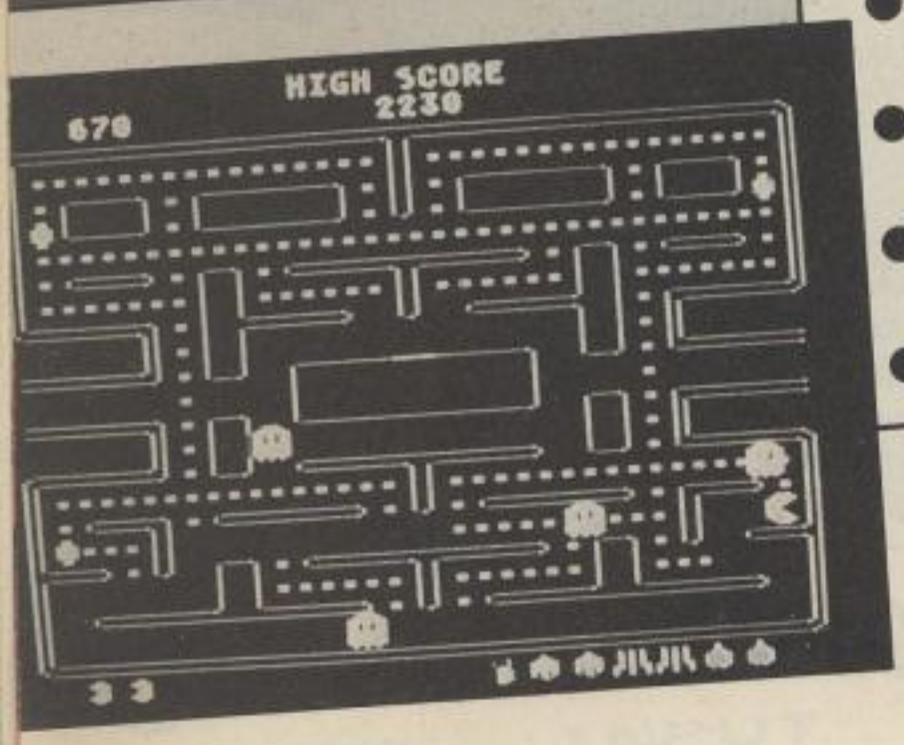


GAMES SUITABLE for the ATARI 600XL

This is a list of all the Atari 400/800 Cartridges and cassettes compatible with the Atari 600XL available at the time of writing.

(FORMAT R=ROM, C=CASSETTE, D=DISK)

ENTERTAINMENT BY ATARI	
Arabian	R
Asteroids	R
Basketball	R
Blackjack	C
Captain Hook	C
Caverns of Mars	R
Centipede	R
Chess	R
Defender	R
Dig Dug	R
Donkey Kong	R
Donkey Kong Jnr	R
Eastern Front 1941	R
ET Phone Home	R
Galaxian	R
Joust	R
Jungle Hunt	R
Lone Raider	C
Millipede	R
Missile Command	R
Ms Pac-Man	R
Pac-Man	R
Pengo	R
Pole Position	R
Qix	R
Robotron	R
Soccer	R
Space Invaders	R
Star Raiders	R
Super Breakout	R
Tennis	R
ATARI APX SOFTWARE	
Anthill	C/D
Avalanche	C/D
Babel	C/D
Code Cracker	C/D
Pre-school Games	D
ADVENTURE INTERNATIONAL	
Tutti Frutti	C/D
ANALOG SOFTWARE	
Carnival (Shooting Gallery)	C/D
Race in Space	C/D
Sunday Driver	C/D
Thunder Island	C
APOGEE SOFTWARE	
Astrowarriors	C
ARTSCI	
Gomoku	C
ARTWORK	
Beta Fighter	C/D
Crazitrack	C/D
Drawpic	C/D
Giant Slalom	C/D
Intruder Alert	C/D
Pilot	C/D
Player/Missile Editor	C/D
Rings of the Empire	C/D
Space Trap	C/D
AVALON HILL	
B1 Nuclear Bomber	C
Bomber Attack	C
Draw Poker	C
Galaxy	C/D
Knockout	C



GAMES NOT SUITABLE for the ATARI 600XL

ATARI SOFTWARE
Scram

ATARI APX SOFTWARE
Blackjack/Casino

ADVENTURE INTERNATIONAL
Airline

ARCADE PLUS
Ghost Hunter

ARTSCI
Cypher Bowl
Reversi

BRAM INC
Attack at EP-CYG-4

BRODERBUND SOFTWARE
Bank Street Writer

CAVALIER COMPUTERS
K-Razy Kritters - 16k ROM
K-Star Patrol - 16k ROM

CENTAURSOFT
Skiing

COSMI
Aztec Challenge

DATASOFT
Bishop's Square
Sands of Egypt
Text Wizard

ELECTRONIC ARTS
Archon

EMI SOFTWARE (UK)
Compute 4 and Reversi
Figure Fun

EPYX (Previously AUTOMATED SIMULATIONS)
Crypt of the Undead
Escape from Vulcan Isle

Legionnaire	C/D
Moon Patrol	C
North Atlantic Convoy Raider	C/D
Nukewar	C/D
Road Racer and Bowler	C
Shootout at OK Galaxy	C
Tank Arcade	C

BIG FIVE SOFTWARE

Miner 2049er	R
Scraper Caper	R

BINARY SOFTWARE

Star Island	D

BRODERBRUND SOFTWARE

Apple Panic	C/D
Genetic Drift	C/D
Labyrintt	C/D
Stellar Shuttle	C/D

CAVALIER COMPUTERS

Bug Attack	C/D

CBS (Previously K-BYTE)

Blue Print	R
Boulders and Bombs	R
K-Dos	R
K-Razy Antics	R
K-Razy Kritters	R
K-Razy Shootout	R
K-Star Patrol	R
Mountain King	R

CENTAURSOFT

Skiing	D
TT Racer	D

CHANNEL 8 SOFTWARE (UK)

Arrow of Death - Part 1	C
Arrow of Death - Part 2	C
Caves of Death	C
Circus	C
Constructor	C
Escape From Pulsar	C
Feasibility Experiment	C
Golder Yaton (The)	C
Murder at Awesome Hall	C
Perseus and Andromeda	C
Sky Snakes	C
Ten Little Indians	C
Time Machine	C
Wizard of Akryz	C

COMPUTER MAGIC

Kayos	C/D

COMPUTHINGS

Attack of the Yeti	C
Disaster At Sea Lab	C
Roman Conquest	C
Star Fortress	C
Submarine Strike	C

CONCOM ENTERPRISES

Close Encounters	C
High Voltage	C

COSMI

Caverns of Kharfa	C
E-Factor	C
Melt Down	C
Slinky	C
Spider Invasion	C

DATASOFT

Canyon Climber	C/D
Clowns and Balloons	C/D
Maze Encounter	D
Pacific Coast Highway	C/D
Poovan	C
Shooting Arcade	C/D
Zaxxon	C

DON'T ASK

S.A.M.(Software Automatic Mouth)	D

DYNACOMP

Stud Poker	C

EMI SOFTWARE

British Heritage Jigsaw Puzzles	C
British Heritage Jigsaw Puzzles	C
Carnival Massacre	C
Computer War	C
Computer War	C
Cribbage and Dominoes	C
Darts	C
European Jigsaw Puzzles Vol 1	C
European Jigsaw Puzzles Vol II	C
Figure Fun	C
Hickory Dickory/ Baa Baa Black Sheep	C/D
Humpty Dumpty and Jack and Jill	C
Jumbo Jet Pilot	R
Kickback	C
Major League Hockey	R
Orc Attack	R
Owari + Bull and Cow	R
Pool	R
River Rescue	R
Snooker and Billiards	R
Soccer	R
Submarine Commander	R
Super Cubes and Tilt	C

ENGLISH SOFTWARE CO (UK)

A C E	C/D
Air Strike	C/D
Air Strike II	C/D
Batty Builders	C
Bombastic	C
Capt'n Sticky's Gold	C

EPYX (Previously AUTOMATED SIMULATIONS)

Alien Garden	R
Ricochet	C

FIRST STAR

Astrochase	C

FUNSOFT

Snokie	C
Time Runner	C/D

GAMMA

Soccer	C

King Arthurs Heir
Nightmare (The)

GAME STAR
Baja Buggies

CEBELLI SOFTWARE
Match Racer
Pathfinder

IMAGIC
Atlantis - 8k ROM
Demon Attack - 8k ROM

IN-HOME SOFTWARE
Alien Swarm

INNOVATIVE DESIGN SOFTWARE
Pool 400 - 16k ROM

Speedway Blast - 16k ROM

LJK ENTERPRISES
Letter Perfect - disk
Letter Perfect - 24k ROM
Mail Merge Utility

MICRO GRAPHIC IMAGE
Spelunker

MMG
Final Flight

PARKER (UK)
Astrochase - 16k ROM

PROGRAM ONE
Shaft Raider

QUALITY SOFTWARE
Ali Baba and 40 Thieves
Fastgammon

SIERRA ON-LINE (ON-LINE SYSTEMS)
Mission: Asteroid-High Res G

SIRIUS SOFTWARE
Bandits
Blade of Blackpoole

STRATEGIC SIMULATIONS
Cytron Masters
Knights Of The Desert

SURREALISTEK
Catacombs of Baruth

SYNAPSE SOFTWARE
Chicken - 16k ROM
Claim Jumper - 16k ROM
Drelbs
File Manager
Nautilus
Necromancer - 16k ROM
Picnic Paranoia - 16k ROM
Protector - 16k ROM
Shadow World
Slime - 16k ROM

SYNCRO
Alien Hell

TG SOFTWARE
Juice

CEBELLI SOFTWARE
Embargo R
Firebird R

CENTRY SOFTWARE
Rosens Brigade C/D
Sea Bandit C/D
Spider Quake C/D
Star Base Fighter C/D

HAYDEN
Bull Dog Pinball C

HUMAN ENGINEERED SOFTWARE
Gridrunner R

IMAGINE
Leggit C

IN-HOME SOFTWARE
Alien Swarm C/D
Crypts of Terror C/D
Guardian of the Corn C/D
Sentinel One C/D

MASTER CONTROL SOFTWARE INC
Pharoah's Pyramid C

MEGASOFT
Megalegs C

PARKER (UK)
Frogger R
Popeye R
Q-Bert R
Super Cobra R

PRISM/SPECTRUM
Galactic Chase C/D

PROGRAM DESIGN INC
Bowling C/D
Moonbase Io C/D
Musicbox C/D
Sammy The Sea Serpent C/D
Starship Duel C
Time Bomb C/D

QUALITY SOFTWARE
Assembler C
Disassembler C
Tank Trap C/D

RANTOM MICROCOMPUTER
Thrax Lair D

ROKLAN CORP
Anti Sub Patrol C/D
De-Luxe Invaders D
De-Luxe Invaders R
Gorf D
Gorf R
Wizard of Wor D
Wizard of Wor R

SCREENPLAY INTELLIGENT STATEMENTS
Arena 3000 C/D
Sentinal C/D

S E G A ENTERPRISES
Buck Rogers R
Congo Bongo R
Star Trek R

SIERRA ON-LINE (ON-LINE SYSTEMS)
Crossfire C
Crossfire R
Frogger C/D
Golf Challenge C
Jawbreaker C/D
Jawbreaker R

SILICON VALLEY SYSTEM
Snapper D

SIRIUS SOFTWARE
Alpha Shield R
Fantastic Voyage R
Fast Eddy R
Final Orbit R
Squish 'em R
Turmoil R
Worm War 1 R

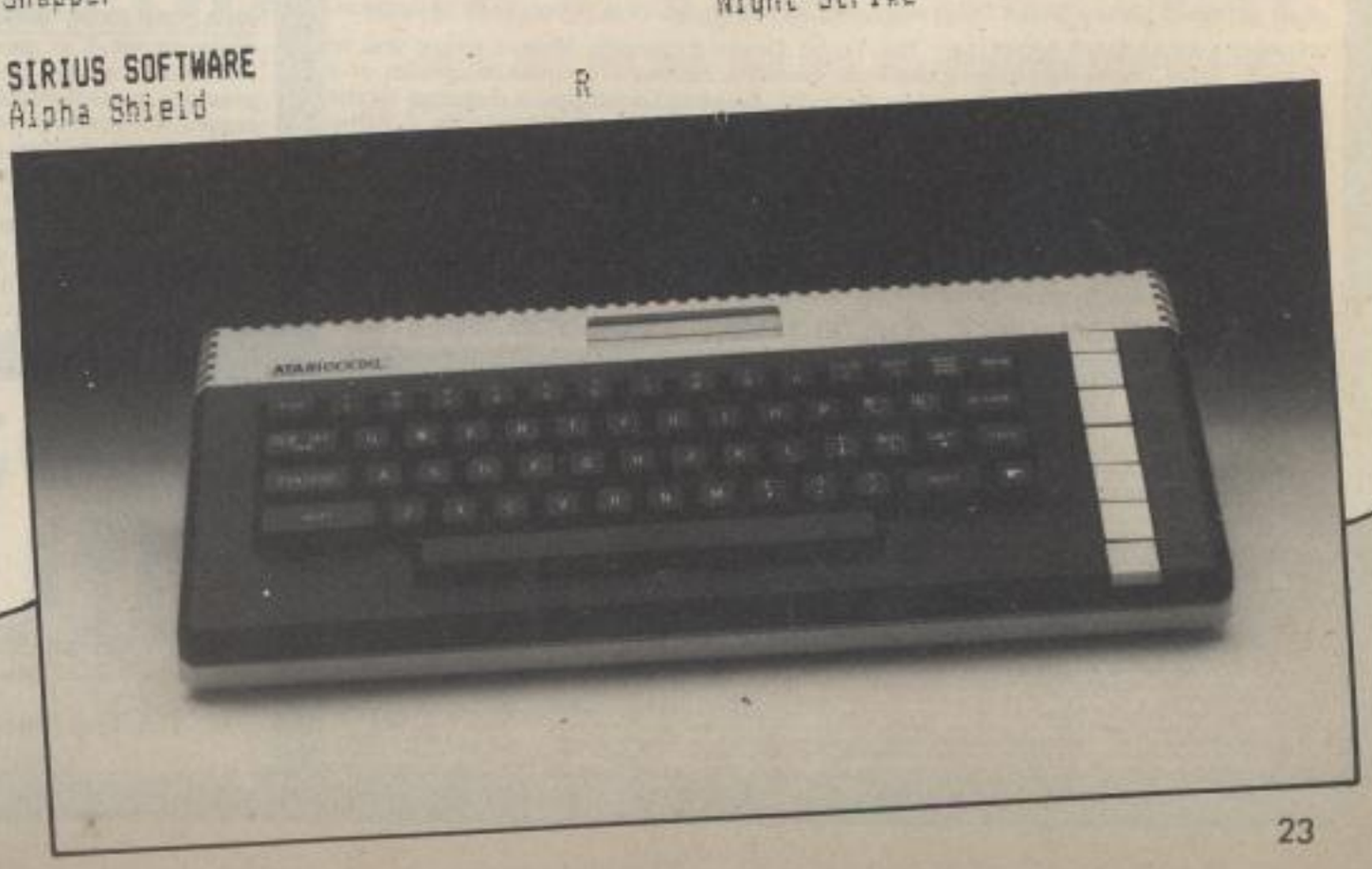
SPINNAKER SOFTWARE
Face Maker R
Fraction Fever R

STARCADE
Savage Pond C/D

SYNAPSE SOFTWARE
Chicken C/D
Claim Jumper C/D
Dodge Racer C
Fort Apocalypse C
Fort Apocalypse R
Picnic Paranoia C/D
Shamus C/D
Shamus R
Slam Ball R
Slime C/D
Survivor C/D
Survivor R
Syn Assembler R

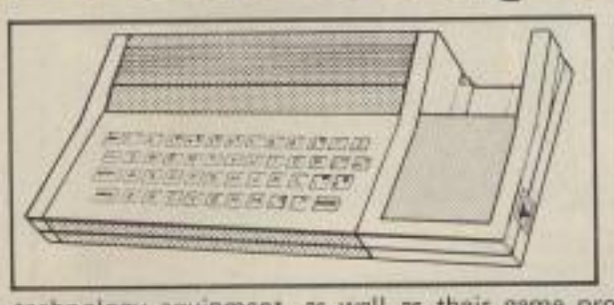
SYNCRO
Astrom C/D
Wordmania C

TG SOFTWARE
Kid Grid C/D
Night Strike C
Night Strike R



HOME COMPUTERS

20K AQUARIUS



AQUARIUS: The brand new Aquarius Personal Computer is part of Mattel Electronics latest developments in advanced technology and offers full home computing facilities, as well as extensive game play, using a very wide range of plug in cartridges. Since Aquarius is a Mattel Electronics product, it benefits by the company's wide experience of producing high technology equipment, as well as their game programming expertise which is evident from the advanced games which have been produced for the Intellivision. Aquarius costs £49 and comes with microsoft basic built in. It is so simple to use that you'll be writing your first programs within minutes of taking the machine out of its box. You can even record the programs on your own cassette recorder at home, so you can use them again at a later date. Most available domestic tape recorders are compatible with the Aquarius.

A POWERFUL MACHINE: For all it's simplicity, it is also very sophisticated. It has a Z80A processor and it comes with 8K of built in ROM and 4K of RAM, expandable to 52K. It has a display of 40 x 24 characters, and a graphic resolution of 320 x 192 with a total character set of 256 (including the complete ASCII set with upper and lower case letters, numbers and additional graphic symbols). The keyboard has 49 full stroke moving keys, unlike some of the cheaper machines which have membrane keyboards. The size of the machine (excluding any of the additional peripherals), is 13" x 6" x 2".

PERIPHERALS: It is very easy to increase the capabilities of your Aquarius as all the peripherals plug straight into one another. You can add a Printer, a Modem, a Data Recorder, Mini Expander and other items. All of the peripherals are very easy to install and what is more, they're easy to use. But the best news of all is, they're easy to afford.

CPM OPERATING CAPABILITY: The Aquarius is capable of being expanded to 52K RAM and later in 1983 a disk drive will be available for it, with the commercial CPM business operating system. This will allow you access to one of the largest software libraries in the world, with literally hundreds of programs available for you to use.

CARTRIDGES: Various sophisticated programs have been launched on plug in cartridges such as a Visicalc spreadsheet and a word processor. Other cartridges include popular Intellivision titles and are available for as little as £12.95.

4K Mattel AQUARIUS – £42.61 + VAT = £49
20K Mattel AQUARIUS – £67.83 + VAT = £78

£49

ATARI 4/800/XL

GREAT LOW PRICES

RECONDITIONED ATARI 400's - FROM £39
We have managed to secure a small consignment of 16K Atari 400 computers which have been factory reconditioned by Atari UK. These units offer exceptionally good value and can be bought in two ways. The Atari 400 (console only) at £39 makes the perfect games machine, allowing you to use plug - in cartridges to capture the game action and graphic quality of dozens of arcade hits. If you want to begin programming straight away, you can purchase a reconditioned 400 with Basic Programmer Kit for only £69. To get your programming off to a good start, we will add our 100 programs free of charge. If you buy the console only initially and then decide to use your computer for programming, you can buy the Basic Kit seperately for £45. We will include with it our 100 Free Programs. All of these models are full specification computers in as good as new condition. We can also offer upgraded reconditioned 400's. The 32K version is now only £78, and the 48K version only £98. (£108 and £128 with the Basic Kit).

RECONDITIONED 800's - £149! We also have a supply of reconditioned 48K Atari 800's. These machines are supplied with the Basic Kit as well as 100 Free Programs on cassette or disk for £149.

ATARI NEW XL RANGE: We now have in stock the brand new 16K 600XL Computer offering expandability to a massive 64K (£89 extra), as well as being totally compatible with the current range of 400/800 computers. We also have the new 64K 800XL, together with the new range of Atari printers. The Atari 1050 disk drive is also in stock and retails for £279.

THE SILICA SERVICE: We like to ensure that our customers are well supported when they buy a computer from us. That is why we give away 100 free programs to all our customers purchasing major items of Atari computer hardware. We also give a 2 year guarantee on all Atari computers we sell.

FREE COLOUR CATALOGUE AND PRICE LIST: A new updated December 1983 Price List has now been published, giving 32 pages of information on over 1000 items for use on the Atari 400/800 and the new XL Atari computer. If you are thinking of buying, or already own an Atari computer write for our 32 page price list and our 20 page colour catalogue.

Reconditioned Atari 400 16K - £39 (inc Basic £69)
Reconditioned Atari 400 32K - £78 (inc Basic £108)
Reconditioned Atari 400 48K - £98 (inc Basic £128)
Reconditioned Atari 800 48K - £149 (includes Basic)
NEW! Atari 600XL 16K - £159 (includes Basic Kit)
NEW! Atari 800XL 64K - £249 (includes Basic Kit)

PRICES FROM ONLY **£39**

VIDEO GAMES

COLECOVISION

THE SYSTEM: The CBS Colecovision offers new standards in video game play. The excellent graphics are well implemented with arcade titles such as Zaxxon, Lady Bug, Gorf, Wizard of Wor, Carnival, Mouse Trap and the lovable Smurfs. The console comes supplied with a three screen arcade quality version of DONKEY KONG. Parker and other companies have also announced ranges of cartridges for Colecovision, to further enhance the wide range of quality titles available for this new television games machine.

THE CONSOLE: The CBS Colecovision video games system has advanced technology which produces superlative graphics resolution and excellent sound effects. The styling of the console and hand controllers has been carefully researched; the console is designed to complement modern hi-tech equipment, and has clear features for easy operation. The hand controllers allow fingertip control via the 8 direction joystick, and feature 2 independent fire buttons. The push button keyboard is used for game selection and for game control with some cartridges. The hand controllers are detachable and are connected to six feet of telephone coil cable, storing neatly away in the console when not in use.

ATARI EXPANSION MODULE: The Atari converter module allows Atari VCS software cartridges to be played on the Colecovision console, allowing owners the freedom to purchase from the extensive range of Atari compatible cartridges. It also means that existing Atari owners can buy the CBS Colecovision games system without discarding their software library. Silica Shop offer part exchange facilities if you wish to upgrade.

TURBO EXPANSION MODULE: The Turbo Driver Expansion Module allows you to actually drive the vehicle that appears on your T.V. screen. The module consists of a steering wheel, dashboard and accelerator pedal. One hand controller is mounted on the dashboard to provide a gear change unit. The module comes complete with a Turbo Driver cartridge, the first of several cartridges to make use of the module, which provides all the action of sitting in the driving seat. This facility is unique to CBS Colecovision.

HOME COMPUTER EXPANSION MODULE: The Home Computer Module scheduled for release in early 1984, allows conversion of the games unit into a sophisticated Home Computer. This flexibility of design is a very important feature of the CBS Colecovision System.

COLECOVISION UNIT - £86.09 + VAT = £99

£99

VECTREX

THE SYSTEM: Vectrex is a totally unique Home Arcade System, which has been exclusively designed and engineered to duplicate real arcade game play. Complete with its own monitor display, Vectrex won't cause any arguments over the use of the family's television because it has its own built in screen.

THE SCREEN: Vectrex does not use ordinary display techniques, instead it uses vector scanning to control the images on the screen. With this scanning method, the gun only updates the area of the screen that has changed, whereas a normal T.V. re-transmits the ENTIRE screen 50 times a minute. It is this that gives Vectrex its speed, and means that very little computer power is required for screen control, and the results provide very fast responding and clear images. These 'Vector Graphics' are used in several arcade games such as Asteroids and Battlezone, to give you incredibly high resolution and quality. Vectrex brings all of this from the arcade right into your living room. The Vectrex screen is capable of displaying 80 columns by 40 lines, which is significant to the extensive developments planned for the system.

EXCITING SOUNDS AND ELECTRONICS: Vectrex has an advanced microprocessor with more speed and power and exciting effects than many home video games systems.

REAL ARCADE CONTROLS: Vectrex has a unique control panel, similar to those used in many real arcade games, with 4 concave action buttons and a full 360° self centering joystick. This control panel has a 4 foot detachable cord for maximum player freedom.

REAL ARCADE GRAPHICS: Vectrex has its own 9 inch vertical screen and unlike a conventional T.V. screen, uses advanced display technology to achieve brilliant, high resolution imagery and superb game play never before possible. The Vectrex display provides special effects too, such as 3-D rotation and zooming in and out, which a regular T.V. cannot match. Using a black and white monitor, each Vectrex game comes supplied with its own coloured plastic screen overlay to add to the excitement of game play. The range of Vectrex cartridges (£19.95 each), gives a good selection of arcade games such as Berzerk, Scramble, Rip-Off and Bomber Attack. Vectrex comes complete with a fast paced 'Minestorm' game built into memory.

VECTREX: Vectrex has an advanced state-of-the-art microprocessor with more speed than other T.V. games.

VECTREX – £112.17 + VAT = £129.00

£129

WHO ARE SILICA SHOP?

Silica Shop are one of the leading specialist suppliers of Video Games & Personal Computers. We consider that our service, to those who already own or to those who are interested in any products in our range, cannot be matched by any other supplier. Just look at what we have to offer:

* SHOP DEMONSTRATION FACILITIES - we provide full demonstration facilities at our shop in Sidcup, so that you can get 'hands on' experience of our range.
* SHOP OPENING HOURS - we are open from Monday to Saturday 9 am - 5.30 pm, but close at 1 pm on Thursday's and 8pm on Friday's.
* MAIL ORDER - we are a specialist mail order company and are able to supply goods direct to your door at no extra cost.
* FREE FIRST CLASS DELIVERY - all orders are sent Post and Packing FREE, most of them being despatched by FIRST CLASS POST within 24 hours of us receiving your order details. If you require overnight delivery, this can be arranged at a charge of £3 for items under £50, or alternatively £5 for items over £50.
* MONEY BACK UNDERTAKING - if you are totally dissatisfied with your purchase, you may return it to us in good condition within 15 days for a full refund.
* PART EXCHANGE - we will offer you up to one third of our current selling price in part exchange on your old Mattel Intellivision or Atari console (and related cartridges), if you decide to buy a new video game or personal computer from us.
* SECONDHAND GOODS - we sell secondhand Mattel & Atari console/cartridges (with a full 1 year guarantee), at two thirds of our normal retail price.
* COMPETITIVE PRICES - both our prices and service are very competitive. We are never knowingly undersold and will normally match any bona fide price quoted by our competitors, providing they actually have the goods in stock. We will also send the order to you post and packing free!
* HELPFUL ADVICE - our specialist sales staff are always available to give you advice on the suitability of various computers or T.V. games.
* SERVICE/REPAIRS - are available on all machines in our range, often utilising our in house service facilities. We will support your machine long after you buy it, even if you did not originally purchase it from Silica Shop. All repairs during the manufacturers 1st year warranty period will be completed FREE OF CHARGE.
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ATARI: The Atari Video Computer System known as the Atari VCS or the 2600 has now become the T.V. game brand leader. In the U.K. there are over 700,000 owners of the VCS with access to a range of over 200 different plug in cartridges, each having a multitude of different variations and difficulty levels. Every system comes complete with the main console, two individual joystick controllers, mains adaptor and a FREE PAC - MAN cartridge worth £29.95. The console incorporates special circuits which have been designed to protect your television set.

SECONDHAND GAMES: We currently have several secondhand Atari VCS units in stock which we are selling for only £39 (inc VAT). This price includes the Console, with Combat Cartridge and all the accessories, as well as a 12 month guarantee. We also have stocks of several secondhand cartridges many at half price (all with 12 month guarantee). We will normally buy back secondhand units and cartridges at ¼ of our normal selling price.

£39

EXTENSIVE CARTRIDGE RANGE: The Atari VCS is so popular that in addition to Atari's own cartridges, there are over 150 compatible cartridges, produced by at least a dozen different third party manufacturers. Silica Shop has one of the largest cartridge selections available in the U.K. Our range of over 200 titles (printed either side of this column), includes items in stock now, as well as many of the new releases for later in 1983.

SILICA ATARI CLUB: Silica Shop has over 20,000 Atari VCS club members registered on our computer. As a specialist company we are able to obtain advance information about new developments and send detailed catalogues to all of our club members, enabling them to evaluate new products before they buy. This is a totally FREE service, to receive your copies complete the coupon below.

SERVICE CENTRE: Atari International (UK) Inc has recently appointed Silica Shop as an authorised Atari Service Centre. This means that we can now service your Atari VCS or 400/800 (under guarantee if applicable), whether or not you purchased it from us.

COMPUMATE – £49 VCS COMPUTER KEYBOARD: We now have in stock the new Compumate Keyboard from Spectravideo which converts the Atari VCS unit into a fully programmable home computer and utilises the popular BASIC Programming language.

STARPATH SUPERCHARGER: The Supercharger costs only £29 and plugs into the cartridge socket of your VCS and expands its RAM almost 50 fold, from 128 to 6,272 bytes. This increased memory adds vivid high-resolution graphics capabilities and significantly lengthens the game playing time. Supercharger has a range of £17.95 multi-load games offering the facility to play a game in several distinct parts (great for adventures), the next section being loaded only when you have completed the previous one. For a detailed Supercharger colour catalogue please complete the coupon below.

£69

ATARI VCS CONSOLE – INCLUDING PAC MAN GAME £60 + VAT = £69

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Pizza Chef
Quest for Gold
Tally Ho
Tanks no Tanks

ACCESSORIES

We stock a wide range of accessories for the Atari VCS and 400/800 personal computers. The same accessories can be used on the Commodore VIC range of computers. The Wico range can also be used with the Texas Instruments computers on purchasing a special adaptor. To give you an idea of the range available, just take a look at the following list:

Trackball by Wico

LE STICK: A mercury filled joystick specially made for one handed operation, with thumb fire button.

QUICK - SHOT: This joystick features a contoured handle grip, thumb trigger and optional base fire button. It is supplied with 4 sure foot suction grips.

STARFIGHTER: Neat and compact with a small direction stick. Metal interior for added strength.

VIDEO COMMAND: With a tapered handle, this joystick is for one handed use. It has a directional control which is similar to a jet fighter joystick.

WICO RED-BALL: An arcade type joystick with a red ball handle, it features 2 fire button locations, one at the base and one on the stick. It comes supplied with 4 grip pads for easier table top use.

WICO STRAIGHT - STICK: The main feature of this joystick is its arcade style, bat handle grip. It also has 2 fire buttons. Four grip pads included for table top use.

WICO TRACKBALL: A true arcade style trackball for use with your Atari or Commodore VIC. This product is designed to give arcade control in your living room.

12' EXTENSION LEAD: A 12' extension for Atari and Atari compatible joysticks for greater player freedom.

Wico Straight Stick with Stick Fire Button

MATTEL INTELLIVISION

MATTEL INTELLIVISION: The Mattel games unit is a most versatile T.V. game which offers 3-D graphics quality for only £79. Each cartridge comes with 2 overlays which fit over the unique hand controller giving easy directions for game play. Using the handset's control disc, objects can be manoeuvred in 16 directions to give an accurate simulation of lifelike movement.

NEW MATTEL CARTRIDGE RELEASES: Why not complete the coupon below and join the Silica Mattel Owners Club and receive our FREE news bulletins and 16 page catalogues detailing new Mattel releases. There will soon be over ninety cartridges available for the Mattel, and a small selection from these is listed below:

MATTEL: Arctic Squares, Burger Time, Buzz Bombers, Chess, Cloudy Mountain, Loco Motion, Mission X, Mystic Castle, Sharp Shot, Solar Sailor, Space Shuttle, Vectron, Winter Olympics. ACTIVISION: Happy Trails, Pitfall, Stampede. C.B.S.: Blue Print, Carnival, Donkey Kong, Gorf, Mousetrap, Smurf, Solar Fox, Turbo, Venture, Wizard of Wor, Zaxxon. IMAGIC: Beezer, Dracula, Ice Trek, Nova Blast, Safecracker, Swords & Serpents, Tropical Trouble, White Water. PARKER: James Bond 007, Lord of the Rings, Popeye, Q-Bert, Spiderman, Star Wars, Super Cobra, Tutankham.

LOW PRICED CARTRIDGES: We are pleased to announce that our prices for many of the Mattel cartridges are now as low as £9.95! If you would like to have details on the Mattel range of cartridges, send off for our up to date price list.

COMPUTER KEYBOARD: In November 1983, Mattel will be launching their new £89, 49-key computer keyboard attachment called 'LUCKY' which is fully programmable and has microsoft basic built in. It will transform your Master Component into a home computer. The adaptor also accepts a 6 note polyphonic music synthesiser and full size 49-key piano keyboard that will make learning music as easy as playing games.

£79

MATTEL CONSOLE – £68.70 + VAT = £79

VIDEO GAME CLUB

In a fast moving market like video games, it is difficult to keep up to date with all the developments that take place. With new programmes and accessories being introduced at a fast rate by several different manufacturers, it is impossible to get all the information you require from one manufacturer alone. It is for this reason, that we have set up owners clubs for the more popular video games and home computers, to keep you fully up to date with what is going on with your particular machine. As far as we know, Silica Shop are the only company to offer such clubs, but that is not surprising since we are the specialists. We currently have **FREE** clubs for the **Atari VCS, Atari 400/800** home computers, and **Mattel Intellivision.** Soon we will have clubs for **Colecovision, Aquarius** and **Vectrex.** So if you own one of these machines, fill in the coupon opposite, and we will enrol you **FREE OF CHARGE** in the club relevant to your computer or video game.

FREE LITERATURE

FREE LITERATURE – Please send me your FREE LITERATURE and catalogues on the following items:

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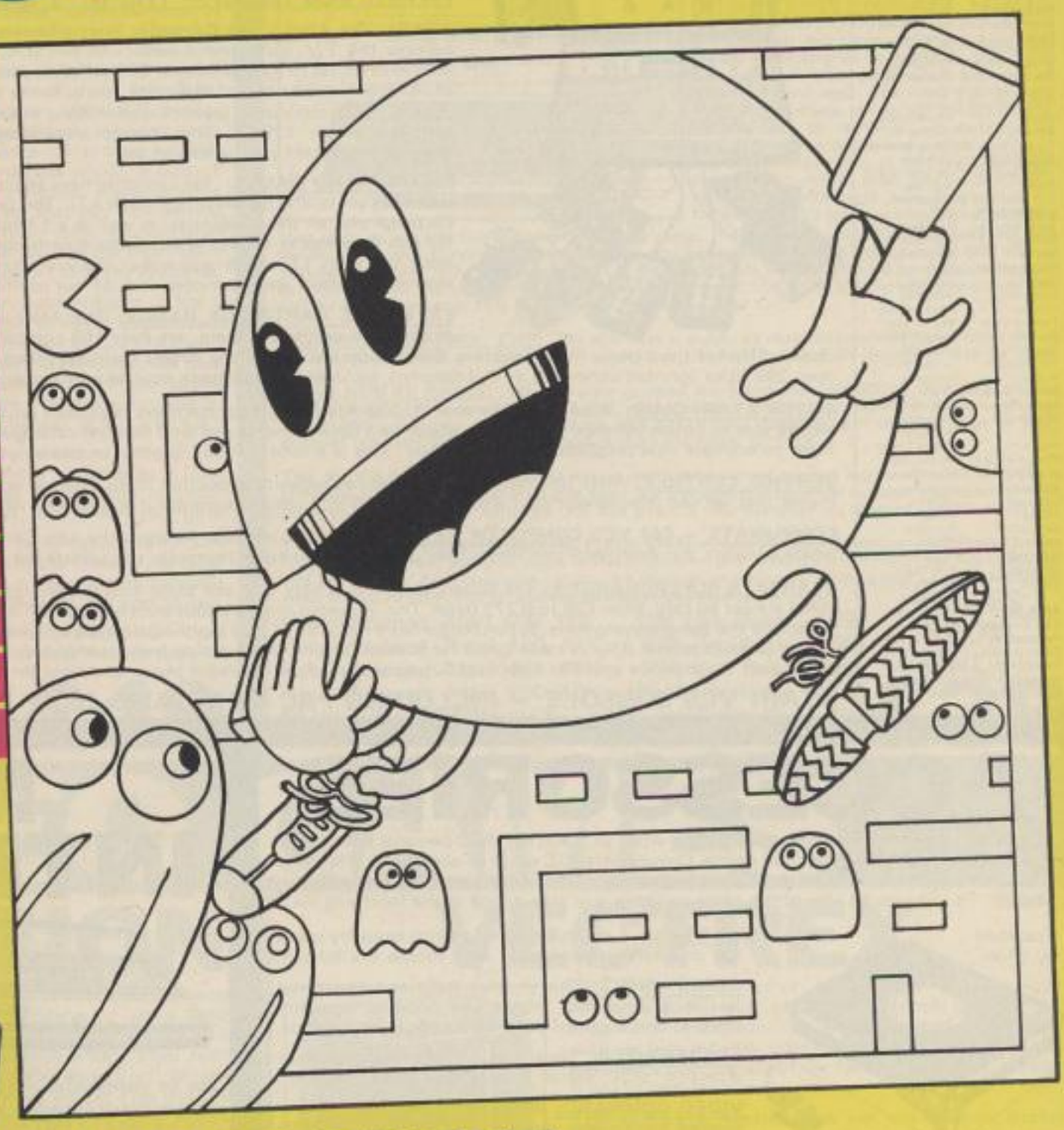
TV GAMER March Competition

SPOT THE I

Win this exciting new home computer, the Atari 600XL together with the 1010 Program recorder, joysticks and five great game cartridges. The five runners-up will win either an AtariSoft game, like Pac-Man, or the latest Atari VCS game of their choice.

600XL home computer

1010 program recorder



HOW TO ENTER

Cut out the right-hand picture together with the form beneath it, marking with a small cross each difference you spot.

Just to make the competition difficult, we're not telling you how many differences there are so you'll have to tell us (pairs count as one).

Then write in 25 words or less (printable, please) an amusing and apt caption for the cartoon, as a tiebreaker.

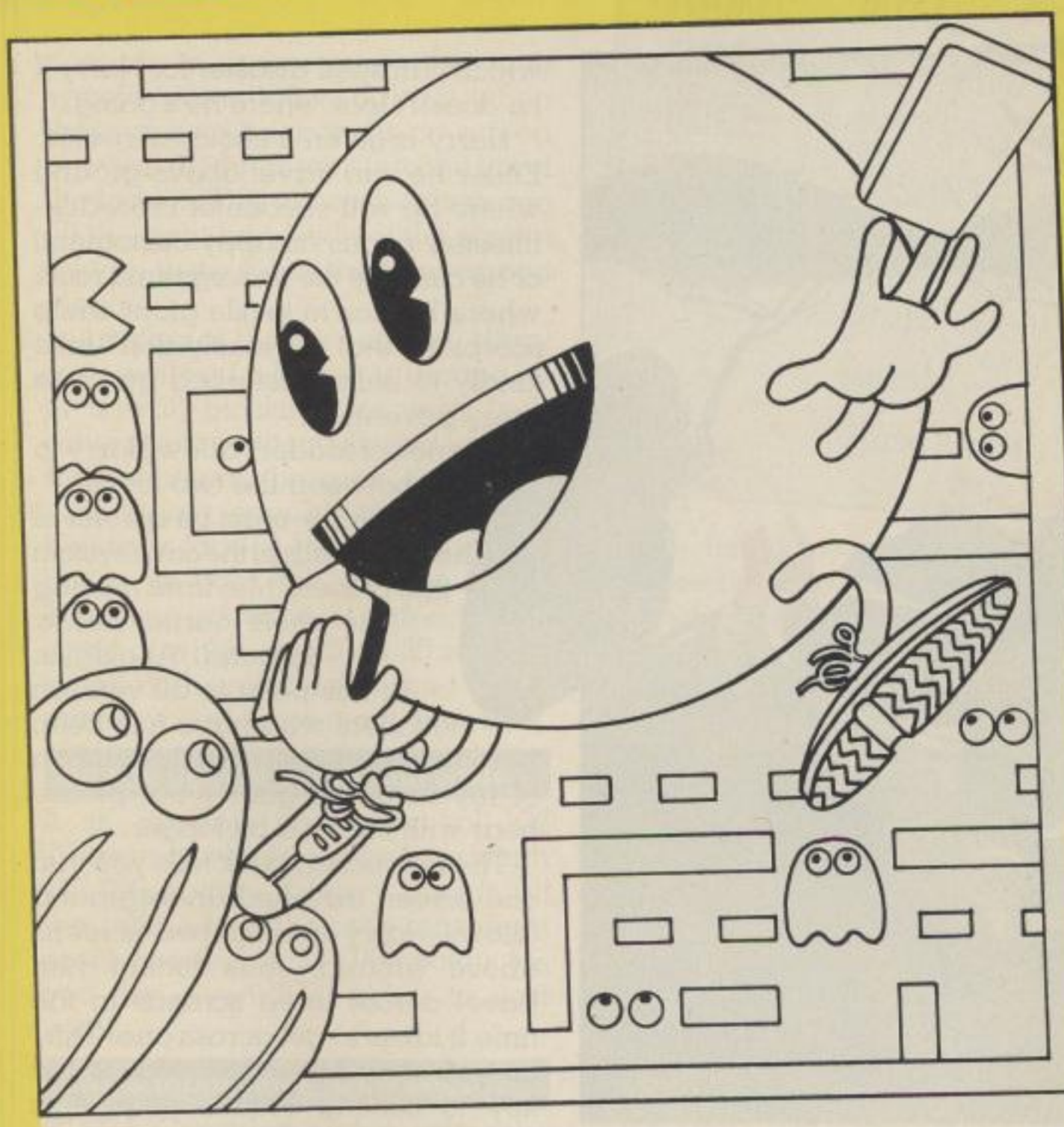
Eastern Front

Te

Pac-Man

Pole Position

E DIFFERENCE



First Prize

1 x 600XL Home Computer
1 x 1010 Program Recorder
1 x Pair of Joysticks
1 x Pac-Man
1 x Eastern Front
1 x Defender
1 x Pole Position
1 x Tennis

Five 2nd Prizes

1 x AtariSoft Pac-Man
or
1 x AtariSoft other available title if winner already has Pac-Man
or
1 x Latest Atari game of their choice if winner owns an Atari VCS

To: The Editor, TV Gamer
187 Oxford Street, London W1R 1AJ

I have spotted ____ differences between the two cartoons. My tiebreaker caption is:

Name _____

Address _____

Spot the difference ***March Competition***

Tennis

COMPETITION RULES

1. All entries received by the closing date, 31st March, 1984, will be examined and correct entries will be judged by the Editor and a representative of Atari.
2. Prizes will be awarded as follows:
First prize will be awarded to the contestant with the correct solution plus, in the event of a tie, the most amusing and apt caption to the cartoon. A second prize will be awarded to five runners up.
3. Prizewinners will be advised by post, and details will be published in a forthcoming issue of TV Gamer.
4. All entries must be made on forms cut from TV Gamer, and photocopies are not acceptable.
5. All prizes are to UK standards, and servicing cannot be guaranteed overseas.
6. The Editor's decision is final.

PITFALL! ™

Diamond rings, gold bars and bags of money are enough to get anyone interested in Activision's exciting adventure game. But how *do* you overcome the pitfalls? *Dave Bishop* finds out.

Pitfall Harry never reckoned on having a map to help him collect all the treasures in the jungle! This could be why most gamers have severe problems claiming even half the rewards cunningly placed in David Crane's fiendishly constructed jungle scenario.

For the sane ones who have not, as yet, been subjected to endless sleepless nights convincing themselves that it really must be possible somehow, a brief synopsis of the game is necessary.

Aided by swinging vines and an underground network of caves, Pitfall Harry has to venture across no less than 256 connected jungle scenes collecting money bags, gold and silver bars and diamond rings.

It may sound easy if long-winded, but as with most good games there's a lot more to it than that.

Problem 1: All the treasures have to be collected in less than 20 minutes.

Problem 2: There is rather a nasty selection of obstacles in Harry's way, including fires, swamps, rolling logs, crocodiles and pits, all of which can spell disaster for Harry if he doesn't look where he's going.

Harry is given a choice of routes. Either he can travel above ground where he will encounter crocodile-infested ponds (snappy customers) or he can take the underground route where he has to tackle giant white scorpions that obviously don't take kindly to being disturbed by some noisy adventurer.

A series of ladders allow Harry to pass between the two levels. However he must be careful of the brick walls in the cave system that prevent him from making the whole journey below ground. Apologies at this point to all veteran Pitfallers who have just been bored to death with the description of my favourite game, but please bear with me for a bit longer.

The instruction book tells you that one screen travelled underground allows Harry to skip two screens above ground, thus letting him travel across three screens in the time it takes to get across one. This, as you may have guessed, is the key to solving Pitfall, since it is impossible to get across all 256 screens in just 20 minutes.

Although the ability to skip screens means that Harry can get through the jungle far more quickly, what if there is a Treasure in one of the screens he's skipped? Well, recovering all the Treasures will require backtracking but the most important thing is to know exactly what is in each screen so that all 32 Treasures can be pin-pointed. Then and only then can you begin to map out a winning route, missing as many screens as possible but still picking up the goodies.

At this point I must draw your attention to the brick walls I mentioned earlier. These walls frequently block your path. The only way it is

possible to descend into the cave system (going left to right) is when there are no brick walls on-screen or when the brick wall is to the left of the ladder. This allows free passage off the right hand side of the screen and on to the left of the third screen along.

Arriving at the third screen, Harry may well find a ladder to escape by or a wall blocking his way. Let's concentrate on the walls and ladders for a moment, because if Harry is unfortunate enough to hit a wall before a ladder he has no choice but to go back the way he came. There are an awful lot of dead ends, some of which are 20 or 30 screens long! With this background information you are now ready to go for it.

How to get the maximum score

It is possible to collect all 32 Treasures, which together are worth 112,000 points. If Harry avoids all the rolling logs then the maximum score possible is 114,000 points (as you are given 2000 points to start with).

Two simple steps to success

STEP 1: Construct a table, listing the contents of each and every screen. This is best done with a patient friend who can enter the relevant data while you move Harry from screen to screen. At this stage, ignore the cave system because you need to know the whereabouts of each Treasure in addition to where the walls and ladders are.

Map half the jungle going right-to-left and the other half going left-to-right as this is the only way to plot all the screens with the aid of caves.

STEP 2: Decide whether you're bold enough to traverse the game from left-to-right. This has an advantage as well as disadvantages. For a start the rolling logs are going in the opposite direction to Harry which means they must be jumped to avoid losing valuable points. If a life is lost Harry will reappear to the left of the obstacle which means that the obstacle (or obstacles) will still have to be negotiated.

There is, however, one big advantage that makes all the suffering worthwhile. To gain the maximum score Harry has to collect all 32 Treasures – he does not have to cover all 256 screens. Examination of your map will show that travelling from right-to-left, Harry must get to screen 251 before all Treasure is claimed. This means that all except the last five screens have either to be visited or passed under before you can achieve the maximum score.

Turning things around is altogether a more exciting proposal because the logs are rolling towards Harry, making the game much more challenging. Going this way also means a saving of the last 12 screens (as opposed to five going the other way). With a time limit of 20 minutes a 12-screen saving is not to be sneezed at; it may well mean the difference between success and failure.

SPECIFICATION

NAME:	PITFALL
SUPPLIER:	ACTIVISION
PRICE:	£29.95
FORMAT:	VCS/INTELLIVISION
RATINGS:	Value 4
	Graphics 4
	Sound 3
	Game play 4

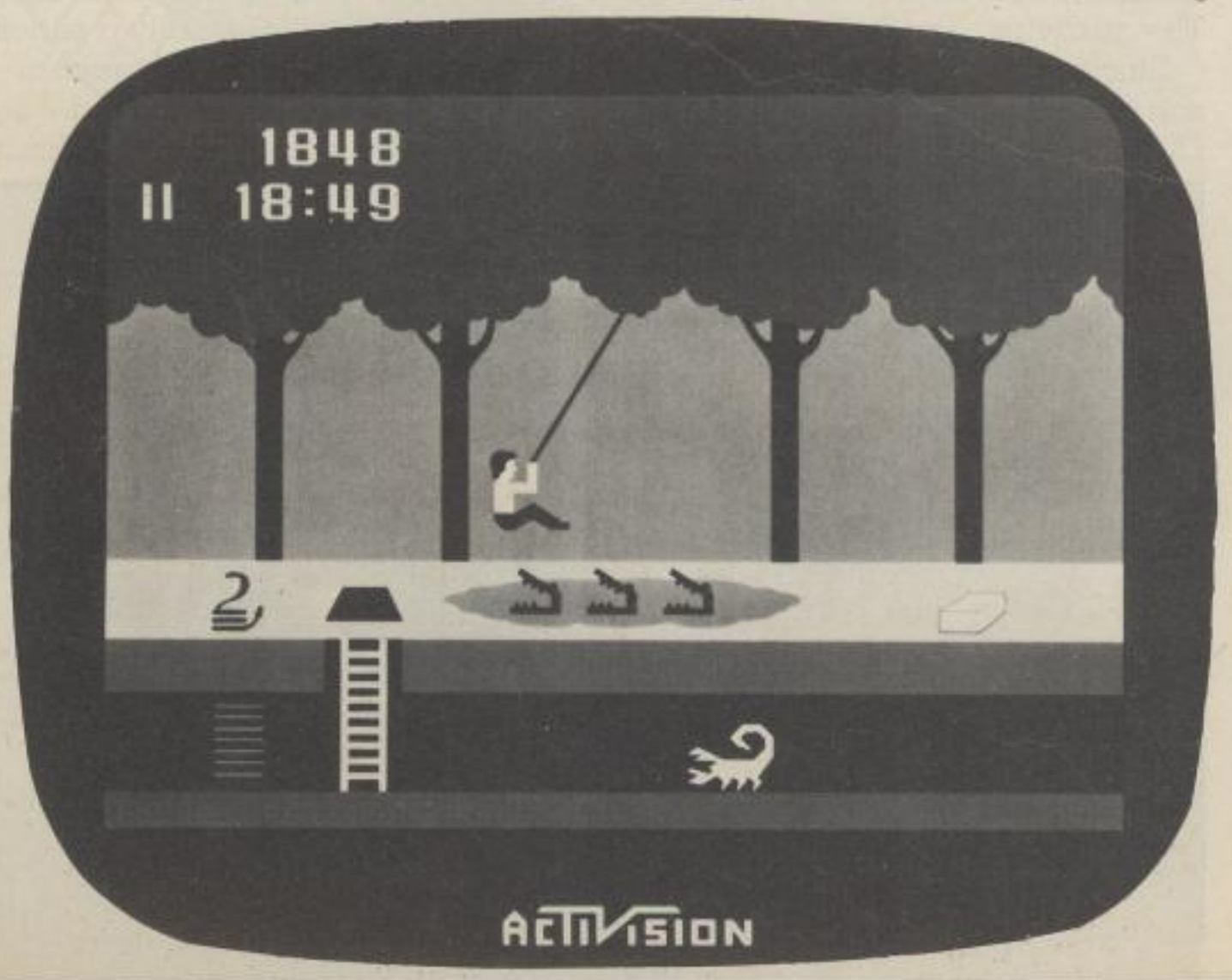
HELPFUL HINTS

★ Have a friend tell you what to expect on each screen as it is coming up, as well as any action required such as having to jump a log etc.

★ Before going for broke, master the skills required in the game such as catching vines and hopping over the crocs without stopping to admire the scenery from the top of their heads!

★ Time can be saved in all sorts of ways: for example, when standing by one of the disappearing pools of water, try guessing when the water will vanish. When this is about to happen, jump Harry towards the water. If timed right he should land just as the water has gone, saving a good second. Experimentation will give you some other useful shortcuts.

Hopefully that should have cleared up some of the mystery surrounding this very popular Adventure game. Now off to your console and good hunting. □



SPECIAL DELIVERY

Getting games into your machine

For most people it's simple: you turn on the games machine, poise your fingers over the firing key, or grab the joystick, and away you go.

But in fact there are about half a dozen ways of starting up – and they are increasing all the time.

The best-known way to get a game into a machine is the cartridge, more fully known as a ROM ("read only memory") cartridge. Its popularity is due to two things: its simplicity and its speed. There is always what's known as a trade-off, though. You have to pay for speed and convenience, which is one reason why carts are still comparitively expensive.

If time is no object, then you will already be familiar with our old friend the compact cassette. The advantages of cassettes are obvious, and well-known: they are cheap and there's very little about them to go wrong. Of course, they are slow, and unless your machine is one of the lucky ones that uses a "dedicated" cassette recorder/player, you may experience loading problems (and, if you write your own programs, saving problems, too). Experimentation with playback volume controls will usually cure that little matter, and in general the cassette is such a handy format that even some £300-plus business machines have a cassette port.

The new compact Sinclair ZX Microdrive – fast access at low cost.

Before we leave the cassette, don't forget the "other" cassette format, the micro-cassette. About a quarter the size of the regular audio cassette and originally intended for office dictation machines – but then, so was the compact cassette – the micro cassette has the advantage of small size, though the actual cassettes are rather dearer than compact cassettes. Some of the cheaper machines may produce loading errors, and if using a two-speed machine, you must stick to the faster speed.

The really serious games players, of course, will prefer to store their programs on disk, especially if they write their own. Disks, known more properly as either a floppy disk (in Britain) or diskette (in USA), are almost as quick as a cart, plus you can store whole selections of games on to one single disk.

Here there is a definite trade-off, because not only do the disks cost between £2 and £3 each, but the disk drives which are needed can cost more than the actual computer they serve. Also, the disk operating system (DOS) may use up some valuable memory that's left free by carts and cassettes. On the other hand, once you have compared loading a game from cassette with the ease of loading it from disk, it'll be no contest. The disk wins, hands down.

The Buzzbox – Scicon's first entry into the micro communications market.

Sinclair users may be aware of a sort of cassette/disk hybrid, which Sir Clive calls a Microdrive. This is actually a sort of tape, which runs past the play/record heads much faster than the very slow speed of the audio cassette, making loading much faster. It also makes it practical to keep more than one item on each tape, since the time taken to locate them is almost as quick as a disk.

So far, we've been talking about laying out money, in some cases quite large sums, but did you know that it's possible to get *FREE* games?

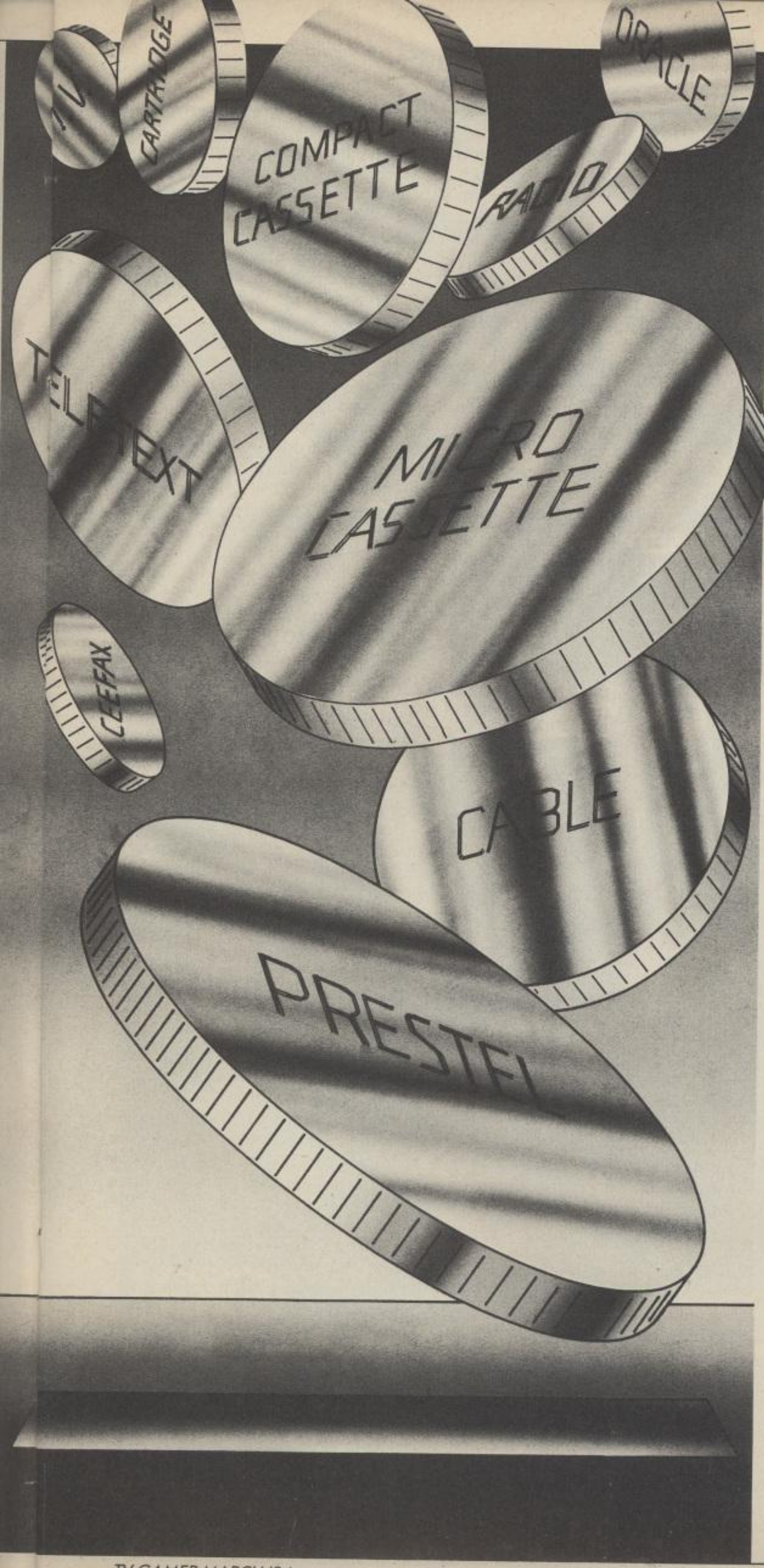
The most basic way of getting a free game – you could hardly describe it as the easiest – is by typing in a listing from one of the magazines that print games programs. The problems are that it's a bit of a chore, takes ages, is very prone to typing errors, especially if you're not too well up on programming language, and since such programs are usually written in Basic, they're likely to run too slowly to be interesting. (Adventure games are the exception, where it doesn't matter if they're slow. You need time to think, after all.)

You can also get programs off the air, so to speak.

If you've ever put a computer cassette into a tape player that's not plugged into your games machine, you'll know that it's actually a series of high-pitched buzzes and squeaks – and a rather unpleasant sound it is, too! Well, it is possible to broadcast

Getting games onto your screen

MEDIUM	ADVANTAGE	TRADE-OFF
Cartridge	Quick	Not cheap.
Compact cassette	Cheap	Slow. Load problems.
Micro-cassette	Handy size	Dearer than compact cassettes. Load problems.
Disk	Quick access. Superb graphics. Good storage.	Accessories expensive Not yet widely available.
Broadcasts on radio and TV	Free	Not much choice available. Recording off TV tricky without a video.
Teletext	Free	Equipment expensive. Not much choice available.
Prestel	Wide range of programs available. Some free.	Equipment expensive. High running costs.
Cable	Wide range of programs may be available.	Not available yet. Costs could be expensive.



those sounds, or send them over telephone cables, and there's going to be a lot more of that as Britain becomes what the pundits are calling "the wired society".

A number of radio stations have started broadcasting computer programs – including games – and these can be recorded by hooking up your cassette recorder to the radio in the way you do to record the Top Twenty. (Ironically, radio stations have always tried to dissuade people from recording stuff off the air, which is technically illegal, but now they're encouraging you to!)

TV shows, like BBC's "The Computer Programme", have also done this, though recording TV sound is usually a bit more complicated. If your family has a video, it probably has an "audio out" socket on the back: you can hook up a cassette recorder to this without affecting the video's ability to record sound-and-vision in the normal way. Also, some TV sets have earphone sockets, but you should check with your dealer before hooking up anything to these, because the voltages inside a TV set are quite large, and you may need to have an isolating transformer fitted for safety's sake.

Cable television is being introduced in about a dozen selected areas of the country during 1984 and 1985, and while it's too early yet to talk about what exact programmes they'll be carrying, computer games have been mentioned. You could be charged extra for these, or the cost could be absorbed within the monthly rental – which will vary between £6 and £30 a month, depending on the kind of service you want. In general, cable companies are likely to make it difficult for people to record programmes off the air. One recent demonstration used a "dedicated" terminal (one which can't be used for anything else) without any provision for linking it with any kind of external storage device, tape or disk.

Similar to cable, but available now, is what is known as "Telesoftware", namely programs which can be loaded into your machine from the Teletext and Prestel services. There's some confusion about these, because they look somewhat similar on the screen, but the basic difference between them is that Teletext is (more or less) free, while Prestel you pay for.

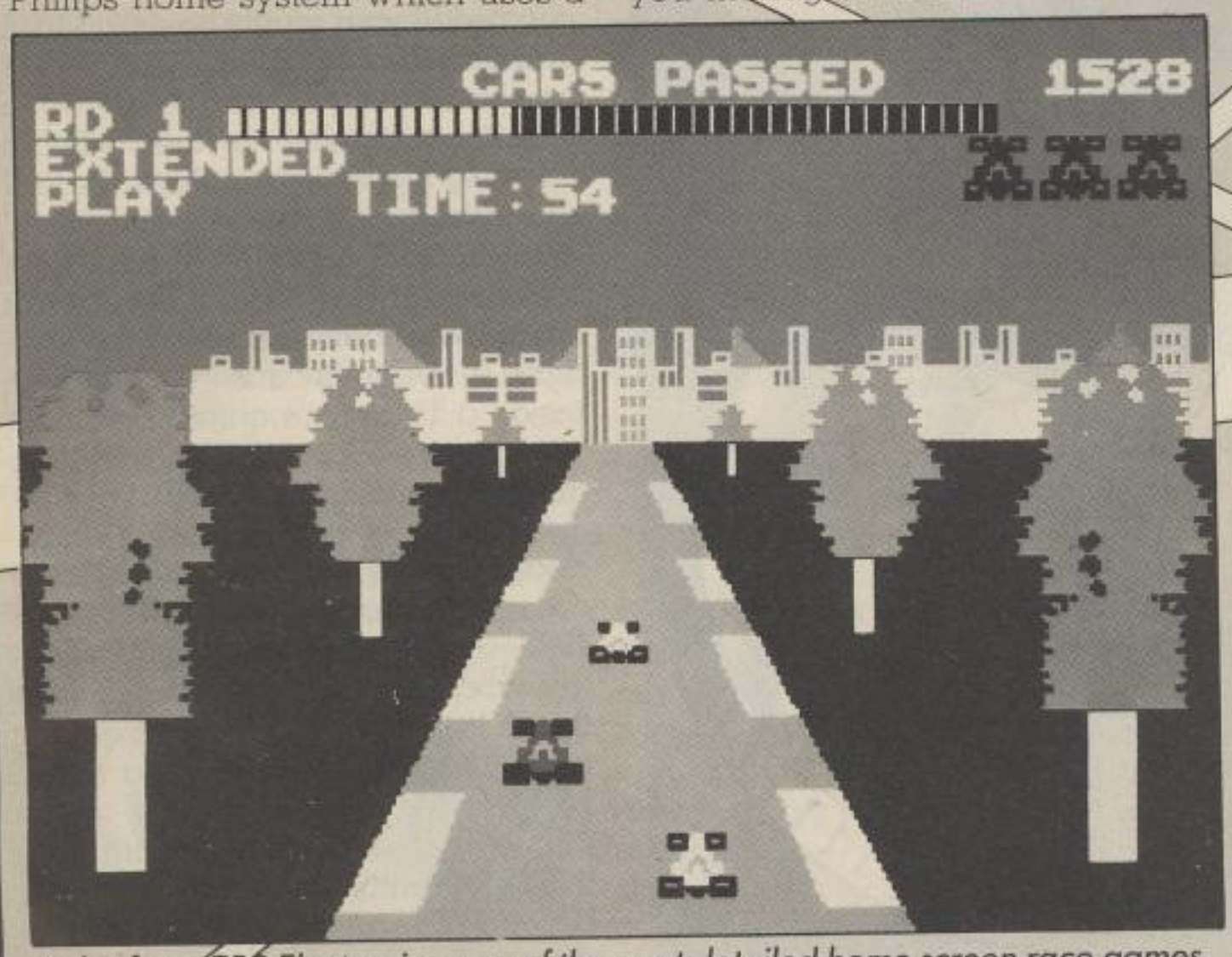
Teletext is run by BBC and ITV and

Continued on page 66

One of the least successful products to come out of the home entertainment revolution was the video disk. And it looks unlikely to ever become as popular with home users as its makers intended.

If the Great British Public hasn't been impressed however, the video game manufacturers have been quick to recognise its possibilities and several arcade games using the new technology have already been released, with many more to follow.

All of the games produced so far used the Pioneer disk player, a slightly modified version of the Philips home system which uses a small laser to read the digitally encoded information on the disk. The laser is the key to the video disk's successful use in games as it can switch from reading one part of the disk to another almost instantaneously.



Turbo from CBS Electronics, one of the most detailed home screen race games, still bears little comparison with the superb graphics of the laser-based games.

The first thing you notice when playing one of the new machines is the picture quality. Because most of the screen image is taken from actual film footage, the graphics are superb and can make the games frighteningly realistic.

There are three ways of putting video disk technology to use in games. Firstly, the disk can provide a filmed background for a conventional computer graphic game. Secondly, the disk can do away with computer graphics altogether. By using the game controls you can deal directly with the video disk and this type of game takes full advantage of its ability to jump from one section to another without a visible break. The third and most popular type of game is the totally interactive version in which the disk and the computer are electronically linked at all times. Shoot a computer-generated cannon burst at a disk-generated space-ship for example, and an accurate shot will destroy the target. Because of the technology involved, they don't come cheap and you can expect to pay 40p for a game. Of course, if you manage to survive for the full length of the game, you're still getting very good value indeed.

M.A.C.H. 3 by Mylstar

According to the cabinet, M.A.C.H. stands for Military Air Command Hunter and it's unusual in offering a choice of two games. What would you rather be flying, a bomber or a fighter?

The game comes in upright and full cockpit versions and the sit-down model is again unusual in using a screen magnifying lens. While providing a giant screen image, the picture quality suffers considerably and the upright version with the normal screen gives better-quality graphics.

There's a joystick control with a machine-gun trigger and two buttons which control bombs or missiles depending on which game you're playing. The background on both games is actual film footage and both your aircraft and the enemy's are computer generated.

On bombing missions your first target is a row of planes parked on an air strip. You then move on to attack oil storage tanks, ships and other strategic installations. At all times you are threatened by flak which explodes in mid-air and will destroy your bomber by touching it. If you avoid the flak, watch out for the enemy fighters which can be destroyed by machine-gun fire. Having survived the fighter attacks, you will find yourself threatened by deadly radioactive clouds. Avoid at all costs!

The fighter version of M.A.C.H. 3 is a much faster and more energetic game. Instead of flying at a constant altitude you find yourself skimming lakes, soaring into cloud cover and dodging through valleys and chasms with inches to spare. From time to time your commanding officer gives instructions which are usually more confusing than useful; particularly when he tells you to attack a bridge and all you can see is a dam.

Both bomber and fighter games are extremely well designed with constant surprises and traps for the unwary player and in the fighter game particularly, the sensation of flying at low level is amazingly realistic.

Laser Grand Prix by Taito

The Laser Grand Prix takes place on the Mount Fuji circuit in Japan. The track itself appears on the screen via the video disk and the cars are produced by the computer. Because the computer doesn't have to cope with the background information as well, the cars themselves are very well detailed with little touches such as flames coming from the exhaust pipes at certain speeds.

Having squeezed into the cockpit, you will notice that the controls are excellent; brake pedal, accelerator, gear shift and a steering wheel that feels just like a real one. Four speakers – two on the console and two on the head-rest supply very loud and convincing sound effects.

Before starting the race itself you must qualify by driving a quarter of a mile in less than 30 seconds in a straight line. This is so easy that if you fail, it's probably because you forgot to put the engine in gear.

The Arcade Scene

THE LASER GAME IS HERE!

Video disks may have flopped as far as home players are concerned but the game manufacturers have certainly been quick to realise their potential. *Andy Harris* reports on the latest technology to hit Britain's arcades.

Once on the starting grid, you and five other cars set off towards the first corner; change down, brake gently and take the outside line accompanied by squealing tyres, screeching brakes and the roar of the engine. Once you get the hang of it, you can easily forget you're just playing a game and you'll find yourself leaning into the corners and bracing yourself when a crash looks likely.

If you complete the race in one piece and within a certain time you get extended play but if you win, you then get entered for the "Spark Race". This is run on the same track but the colours are altered and the circuit takes on a dramatic and unreal appearance. Win the spark race and you qualify for the "Fantastic Race" which takes place in a space environment. Drive well and you cay stay on the machine for around 20 minutes. □

GAMES GOVERNMENTS PLAY

SKY WARS

For an everyday gamer, combat games are just for fun. But to the world's pilot's they've taken on a whole new dimension. Read on.

To most readers the pilot has probably always been a bit of a hero, whether defying gravity in a primitive flying machine made of wood and canvas or sitting in his cockpit surrounded by a complex array of dials and controls, smoothly transporting us lesser mortals in a modern jetliner. The governments or corporations who employ him may not consider him herioc, but they certainly recognise his importance.

The cost of a modern aircraft is so vast that any man responsible for it will be taken very seriously and no expense will be spared on his training.

Well, almost no expense is spared. It costs the RAF millions of pounds to train a fighter pilot; one hour of fuel will cost £1,000. So it is no surprise that no sooner had the first tennis ball blipped unsteadily on its maiden voyage across a monochrome screen than the experts set to work – to devise ways of using this technology to develop a new generation of flight simulators to help train pilots more economically.

By the time the first Aliens began their relentless attack in the arcades the simulators being produced for pilot training would have turned the average arcade ace 'Space Invader' green with envy, had he been able to get his hands on one.

In the beginning there were accurate reproductions of the cockpit with the controls linked to a computer. This synchronised pilots' movements with a programme which caused the cockpit to move, and the view projected on to a screen in front of the pilot to change. This system provided a realistic simulation of flight and allowed pilots to gain experience of 'flying' a particular aircraft before risking life and limb and millions of pounds by leaving the ground in a real one.

These simulators lacked realism because the images displayed were of

A US pilot is joined on-screen by a friendly wingman in this simulated air battle. The wingman is controlled by a second pilot from a separate dome.

poor quality, but the machines that are used today have the best graphics money can buy.

As time went by so the simulators became more sophisticated and useful additions, such as the opportunity to play back the flight, were incorporated to give the instructor and trainee a chance to go over the flight in detail.

In its basic form the flight simulator is fairly straight-forward and programs have now been simplified and are available for many home games systems, though no one has yet introduced an add-on which tilts and rotates your armchair to match the banks and turns made by the aircraft.

An illustration showing the original concept of air-to-air combat simulation for training purposes.

The whole field of simulations for pilots reached a new dimension when it came to training combat aircraft crews. Even in the early days of air-to-air combat the difference between winning and losing was very clear. The winner flew home while the loser's first priority was to get clear of his doomed aircraft as it plunged towards inevitable destruction.

Since a modern combat aircraft like the Tornado costs £1,800,000, losing has become very expensive. Air Forces have therefore had to put a great deal of time and effort into training their pilots not only to fly their machines, but to fight in them as well.

Simulators to train pilots in the ground-attack role presented few problems. The cockpit was reproduced exactly in the simulator, complete with the 'Head Up Display' of vital information at the front of the cockpit. And although the projected image of the simulator had to include more ground detail and move more quickly with the aircraft flying low, it still hardly stretched the state of the art.

The pilot could practise his skills at tank busting and shooting up supply

A pair of F-18s at the start of a ground attack. One of the computer displays in the cockpit shows a TV picture from a special camera which "sees" in the dark.

columns in a simulator so realistically that any home gamer would give his eye-teeth for one.

The big problem came with air-to-air combat. Only recently has this been satisfactorily overcome by simulation rather than the expensive and risky alternative of putting a newly-qualified pilot into a fighter aircraft and getting him to fight it out in the sky with dummy weapons and camera guns against another aircraft.

The basis of the system is the standard cockpit with microprocessors monitoring the pilot's use of the controls. In order to give the full feel of combat a number of new elements have been included. The most obvious change, at first sight, is that instead of the view being projected on to the screen of the cockpit, the whole cockpit is mounted on a gantry inside a dome.

The inside of the dome is coated to provide a projection surface on to which the sky and ground are displayed as well as the enemy aircraft. The pilot wears a flying suit which has pressure pads and his seat is also fitted with pads.

These simulate the high G forces which the pilot feels as he performs

F-18 Hornet practising night landings on an aircraft carrier.

high speed twists and turns. The enemy aircraft's performance is controlled separately by another computer with an 80 megabyte memory and the pilot can train against any aircraft type just by changing a disk.

By feeding in the trainee's capability he can be started off at an easy level and progress up to a point where the "enemy" is virtually unbeatable. The poor pilot can also have the odds stacked against him as each dome can provide up to three "enemy" aircraft.

The system can be expanded quite simply by bringing in up to three extra domes. Two domes give the opportunity for two pilots to dog fight. The computer projects the images of the opponents' aircraft onto the domes and can also provide and control "wingmen" or other aircraft as either friend or foe.

As the system stands it must represent the ultimate for any gamer, but before you start clearing out the spare room to fit in your dome the price could be a problem. The software alone costs many thousands, which to a government isn't much when compared to the cost of an aircraft, but would take several weeks' pocket money for an average gamer. And then you'd need the computers to play it on... □

Next month we take a look at the world of tank and other land-based simulators.

ATARI VCS OWNERS
INCREASE THE PLAYING POWER OF YOUR ATARI 2600 VCS BY UP TO 50 TIMES

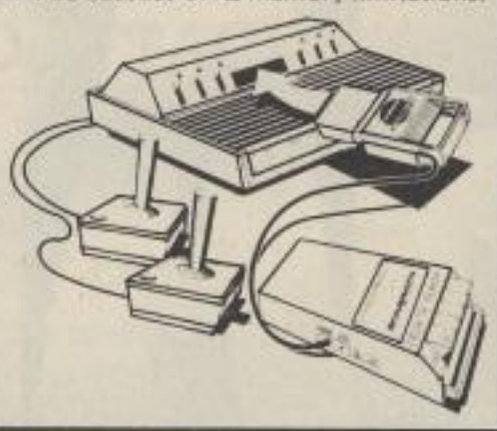
THE NEXT DIMENSION IN VIDEO GAMES©

WHAT IS THE SUPERCHARGER?

The Supercharger plugs directly into the cartridge slot of your Atari VCS to increase its game playing power. With special digital electronics, it multiplies the VCS RAM memory by 49 times, from 128 to 6272 bytes. The Supercharger is unique, in that it can accept programs that have been recorded on standard audio cassette tapes. These are easier and less expensive to develop and market than plug-in cartridges and cost considerably less! The Supercharger is supplied with a standard cable and jack plug which will plug into the earphone socket of any domestic cassette tape recorder. Supercharger lets you play games with high resolution graphics, faster action, and far more complexity. With the extra memory provided by the Supercharger you will now be able to play superior games which could not normally run on an unadapted Atari VCS because of its memory limitations.

MULTI LOAD GAMES - For added complexity and depth

Cassette tape allows Starpath to offer unique Multi Load games. Games like Dragonstomper and Escape from the Mindmaster include several 'loads' on one cassette. When you have finished the first part of a game, you can then load another program giving a different screen or type of game play, thus continuing the game in several distinct parts. This feature is particularly useful in adventure type games. Multi Load games offer complexity and depth that no conventional ROM cartridge game can currently compete with.



FREE CASSETTE - Phaser Patrol (Two screen game)

The Supercharger comes with a highly acclaimed and award winning Phaser Patrol game, and costs only £19.00 including VAT. Details of all the games are given below. For further details, complete and return the coupon below.

£19

PHASER PATROL (FREE!)

Phaser Patrol is a single load game which is FREE with the Supercharger unit. A space game, it has two screens, one featuring the intergalactic battlefield, (below left), and the other showing a Sector Map (below right). The game begins when the devious 'Dracons' launch a surprise attack and you belong to the force which must prevent them from reaching earth. The sector map enables you to warp-hop from one sector to another and it also tells you in what areas the Dracon ships are, so you will need to refer to it before you go into battle. As well as telling you the location of the Dracons, the map shows you where your starbases are, these can bail you out if you get into any trouble. When you have decided on the sector of Dracons to attack, you can go on to the second screen, the battlefield. On this screen you have a view of the vast galaxy ahead and a control panel to keep you informed of your position. A one player game, Phaser Patrol is a highly detailed action packed cassette.

MUTANTS FROM SPACE

Single Load action from Starpath, just as soon as you begin this game you will be under attack. Your task is to vapourize the mutant warriors before they overrun your home planet. Up to four can play and the screen keeps track of the highest score. As well as having nine difficulty levels and two speeds, Communist Mutants from Space (it's full title), has got several features which make it an exciting game cassette providing a variety of options. The real skill in this game however, is winning without using the special features that it offers you!

Price: £8.65 + VAT = £9.95

FIREBALL

You are a juggler, and able to juggle anything from china plates to daggers! Your task in this Single Load game is to smash wall after wall of blocks as you juggle with red hot FIREBALLS! When the ball comes down from the top of your screen, catch it, and then release it back at the wall of blocks. You can score up to a million points! And, if you get to proficient at one pattern of blocks, there are another four to choose from! Up to 4 players can take part in this game and up to 6 fireballs can appear on the screen at once. Be sure you don't get burned!

Price: £8.65 + VAT = £9.95

KILLER SATELLITES

You are the only test pilot of the one rocket ship that can protect the earth from an alien attack of molten metal. The invasion has started, have you the courage and skill to save mankind? A Single Load game, Killer Satellites is for 1 player featuring 2 difficulty settings as well as a 'rapid fire' mode. Other features include: a fuel level indicator; a laser overheat monitor which indicates the temperature of your gun; a global radar scanner and an energy barrier, which can be used to protect you from some of the alien projectiles . . . . but not all of them!

Price: £8.65 + VAT = £9.95

SUICIDE MISSION

Your mission in this game is to shrink down, smaller than a speck of dust, to do battle with a deadly killer virus deep within a human body. Equipped with a microscopic submarine, head for an infection, perilously close to the heart, and towards a fight where you are heavily outnumbered. This is arterial warfare at it's finest. Fire at one of the many germs, and it divides into two. Fire again and the numbers increase once more. A 1 or 2 player game featuring protective shields and two different shooting styles, Suicide Mission has three difficulty options.

Price: £8.65 + VAT = £9.95

DRAGONSTOMPER

Dragonstomper is one of Starpath's Multi-Load cassettes. An adventure game, you've been swept through a time tunnel, right back to the age of warlocks and wizardry. Your mission is to find the Amulet of the Druids. There are clues, but not all easy ones. There are peaceful lakes and forests as well as deadly perils and lurking somewhere is a very vengeful dragon. There are many rewards along the way, but few will reach the final goal. The MULTI LOAD feature gives you THREE seperate game segments, for longer, more challenging game play.

Price: £8.65 + VAT = £9.95

ESCAPE/MINDMASTER

A Multi-Load cassette, your task in this game is to escape from the alien Mindmaster's laboratory, where he has held you as a specimen for study. To win your freedom, you must pass through six 3-D mazes, with each of them being more complex than the last. The first 5 mazes have problems to solve and some surprise intelligence tests. The sixth maze is something special! As this game is too complex to load into your Atari at one time, it loads in FOUR different sections, a feature of the extra play power of the Starpath MULTI LOAD cassettes.

Price: £8.65 + VAT = £9.95

VIDEO GAME CLUB

In a fast moving market like video games, it is difficult to keep up to date with all the developments that take place. With new programmes and accessories being introduced at a fast rate by several different manufacturers, it is impossible to get all the information you require from one manufacturer alone. It is for this reason, that we have set up owners clubs for the more popular video games and home computers, to keep you fully up to date with what is going on with your particular machine. As far as we know, Silica Shop are the only company to offer such clubs, but that is not surprising since we are the specialists. We currently have **FREE** clubs for the **Atari VCS, Atari 400/800** home computers, and **Mattel Intellivision.** Soon we will have clubs for **Colecovision, Aquarius** and **Vectrex**. So if you own one of these machines, fill in the coupon opposite, and we will enrol you **FREE OF CHARGE** in the club relevant to your computer or video game.

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FREE LITERATURE

ACTION FORCE

PARKER
FOR VCS 931511 £27.95
1,1+1,2,3 12 variations
COMBAT SHOOT 'EM UP

This game was to have been titled Action Man but was retitled due to the fact that the smaller Action Force figures are currently more popular than Action Man. The general idea is to protect the soldiers from the giant cobra's lasers and bombs while, at the same time, trying to blast the snake withyour anti-giant cobra gun. Paddles control both the gun and the shields with which you protect the troops. Two people can operate two separate shields and guns while a third can, in some variations, take control of the cobra. This is certainly an unusual game with some nice graphic touches, especially the cobra itself. It's certainly well worth a look.□

AMIDAR

PARKER
FOR VCS 931504 £29.95
1,1+1 6 variations
MAZE

This is definitely a game with a very weird theme. The idea is to move your gorilla around a maze painting the squares around you as you go, whilst avoiding pygmy guards. The guards turn into chickens if you paint into all four corners. If you survive the first wave, you become a paint roller and the guards become pigs. Well, we did say it was weird.□

ARMOUR ATTACK

See "Tanks" Feature.

ARTMASTER

MB ELECTRONICS
FOR VECTREX £29.95
1 3 functions
UTILITIES
Comes with light pen

Up until now, animation has been costly and time-consuming, with no guarantee of results. The cartridge that comes with the Vectrex Light Pen sets out to bring professional-looking animation well within the price range and skill level of most people.

Artmaster has three functions: Sketch, Connect and Animate. Using Sketch you can doodle or draw a master piece with Vector Beams. Connect then allows you to plot points on the screen and link them. The Vector Beams can be stretched inside and outside the points, just in the same way that an elastic band can be pulled around a pin board. Animate is the most interesting of the three functions, allowing you to draw and record up to nine frames and play them back. The result will be a smooth cartoon like 'film' which you can speed up or slow down at will. MB are the first to produce this type of peripheral for a home game system. No doubt other hardware manufacturers are looking to MB to see if it's successful. If it is, and it should be, other systems will probably offer light pens in the future. Very enjoyable.□

ASSAULT

BOMB CA281
FOR VCS £21.95
Identical to Space Raider

ASTRO ATTACK

GOLIATH
FOR VCS 83-214 £14.95
1 single game
SCI FI SHOOT 'EM UP

At first sight this one looked rather like a copy of Vanguard. But don't be deceived – this is actually a good game and quite original. Six Aliens appear on the screen at any one time, moving from right to left. Once the last Alien has been destroyed another six materialise from the ashes of their comrades.

When you've got through eight waves of these there is a sequence which involves navigating a complex maze and docking with the mothership – not easy. On the whole this is a pretty good game and worth the price.□

BEDLAM

MB ELECTRONICS
FOR VECTREX 8134 £24.95
1,1+1 3 variations
SCI FI SHOOT 'EM UP

This game has definite echoes of Atari's coin-op Tempest but unfortunately it's not a direct copy. You're positioned in the screen centre surrounded by an angular shape that grows a spike each round. Each spike issues an assortment of Alien Beasties that you must zap to kingdom come (surprise, surprise). You're armed with the traditional laser and one smart bomb per round which annihilates everything on the screen except yourself. Be warned – things start becoming impossible very quickly. Not a game for the casual player – you've got to be good to survive. It's a good game, but don't be fooled into thinking it's Tempest. It has a family resemblance but is not a twin brother.□

BERZERK

MB ELECTRONICS
FOR VECTREX £19.95
1,1+1 single game

ATARI
FOR VCS CX2650 £29.99

MAZE SHOOT 'EM UP

Based on the popular arcade game by Stern Electronics. The idea is to work your way through as many of the simple mazes as you can before the robots that inhabit them shoot you down or drive you into a maze wall, either of which will prove lethal. You are armed with a laser and to score points you must shoot down the robot guards that stand in your path. That sounds easy, but you are only given limited time before Evil Otto (a sort of rogue Pac-Man) comes bouncing in to squash you flat. Don't let his smiling face fool you – he's quite a formidable opponent as he can bounce over walls and is impervious to your Laser fire. All in all a very good game and quite a successful coin-op/VCS translation.

In the Vectrex version, Berzerk translates surprisingly well from being a Rasterscan game, with the exception of Evil Otto, who doesn't quite look right being made up of straight lines. Despite this minor quibble the game itself is highly enjoyable and it should please all fans of the arcade game.□

BLACK HOLE

GOLIATH
FOR VCS 83-311 £14.95
1 single game
SCI FI SHOOT 'EM UP

A very similar space game to Spectravision's Nexar in both concept and in sound. The graphics are different but that would provide precious little consolation if you've already bought Nexar.□

BLITZ

MB ELECTRONICS
FOR VECTREX 8131 £19.95
1,2 2 variations
SPORT

This is the first sports game to come from

game using Vector graphics, the first of its kind in fact, either in the home or arcade.□

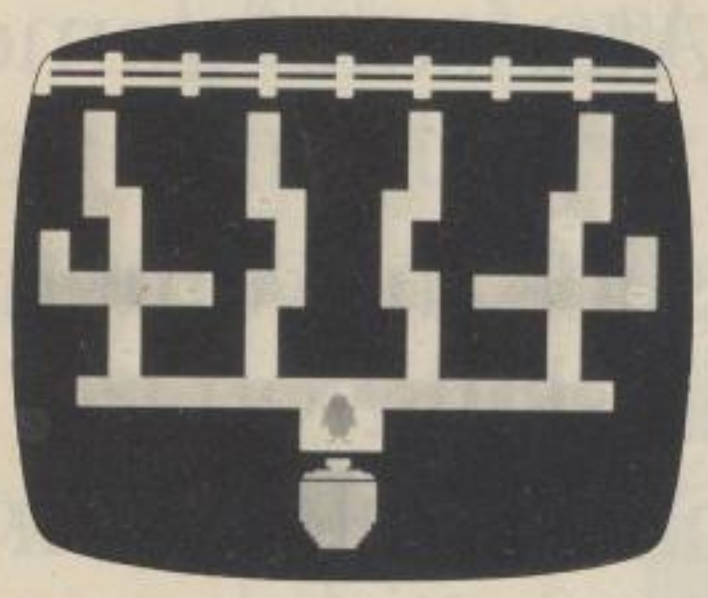
COMMUNIST MUTANTS FROM SPACE

STARPATH
FOR VCS AR4101 £15.95
requires Starpath Supercharger £29.95
1,1+1,1+2,1+3 9 levels
SCI FI SHOOT 'EM UP

The first thing that strikes everyone about this game is the crazy name it has. Designer Steve Landrum, who dreamed up the idea, had originally thought of calling it Galactic Egg, which isn't nearly so bizarre. The game itself is a little like Galaxian. You are at the bottom of the screen and have to shoot creatures that swoop down to get you. But there is an added complication in the shape of a moth who lays new eggs at the top of the screen to replace the ones you have already zapped. Only by shooting her will you be able to finish off the wave. One of the nice things about this game, apart from the graphics and sound, is the wide selection of gameplay – up to four people can play at a time. In addition, you are given a number of different play options within the nine levels such as shields, time warps, penetrating shots etc, so the game variations are limitless. If fast Sci Fi shoot 'em ups are your thing then this game is a must.□

COOKIE MONSTER MUNCH

ATARI
FOR VCS CX26102 £19.95
1,1+1 9 variations
CHILDREN
Requires children's controller or Star Raiders touch pad



For those who don't know, the Cookie Monster is a character from the long-running TV series Sesame Street. The idea of the game is to guide the Cookie Monster through a maze while picking up cookies and dropping them into his cookie jar one at a time. Once you've collected all the biscuits, the screen changes and you have to count with the cookie Monster as he eats them one by one. Understandably very young children seem to find this game the most enjoyable, though all who are familiar with Sesame Street will probably find it amusing.□

COSMIC AVENGER

CBS ELECTRONICS
FOR COLECO COL74310 £29.95
1,1+1 8 variations
SCI FI SHOOT 'EM UP

Rather like the arcade game Scramble, Cosmic Avenger is a scrolling multi-phase shoot 'em up in which you fly over the landscape using laser and bombs to destroy everything in sight.

The graphics and sound effects are very good indeed and the game should appeal to all Scramble fans.□

COSMIC CHASM

MB ELECTRONICS
FOR VECTREX 8126 £19.95
1,1+1 1 variation
SCI FI ADVENTURE

The object of this game is to blow up as many planets as you can before you lose all five of your lives. You are first confronted with a map of the interior of the planet, showing all the underground tunnels and rooms leading to the central core. You must reach this core and destroy it with a bomb in order to go on to the next planet. You only see this map for three seconds so you must be quick to plot the most direct route, otherwise you won't make it back before the bomb explodes. In each of the rooms leading to the core is an expanding centre which gets bigger the longer you take passing through. You are also faced with a group of drones hellbent on your destruction. Cosmic Chasm is one of the few Sci-Fi shoot 'em ups that actually have an element of genuine strategy to them. The route configuration and your starting position are both random so you actually have to plan your journey during the brief few seconds the planet map is on the screen. No other game I know of gives the gamer so much control over his or her Destiny. Hopefully the first of many.□

COSMIC CREEPS

TELESYS
FOR VCS TEA1003 £27.95
1 single game
SCI FI SHOOT 'EM UP

For a change here's a space game that hasn't lot its sense of humour. In this game you are on Orbinaut and your first task is to get from the planet at the bottom of the screen to the space station at the top. En route you must avoid red plasma and the Space Skeeters, which, when bumped into, will send you tumbling into space. If you do make it to the space station you gain control of it. You can then move the station left and right and fire the space station's weapon, the Bopper.

Now comes your second task, the rescue. A Cosmic Kid will start his escape from the bottom left-hand corner with a couple of Cosmic Creeps hot on his heels. It's up to you to bob the Creeps so the Kid can escape. While you're doing this, the planet at the bottom of the screen is getting lower and lower. If it sinks below the screen before you reach 5000 points it's the end of the game. However, if you do manage it then you go onto a tougher planet with faster Creeps.□

CROSS FORCE

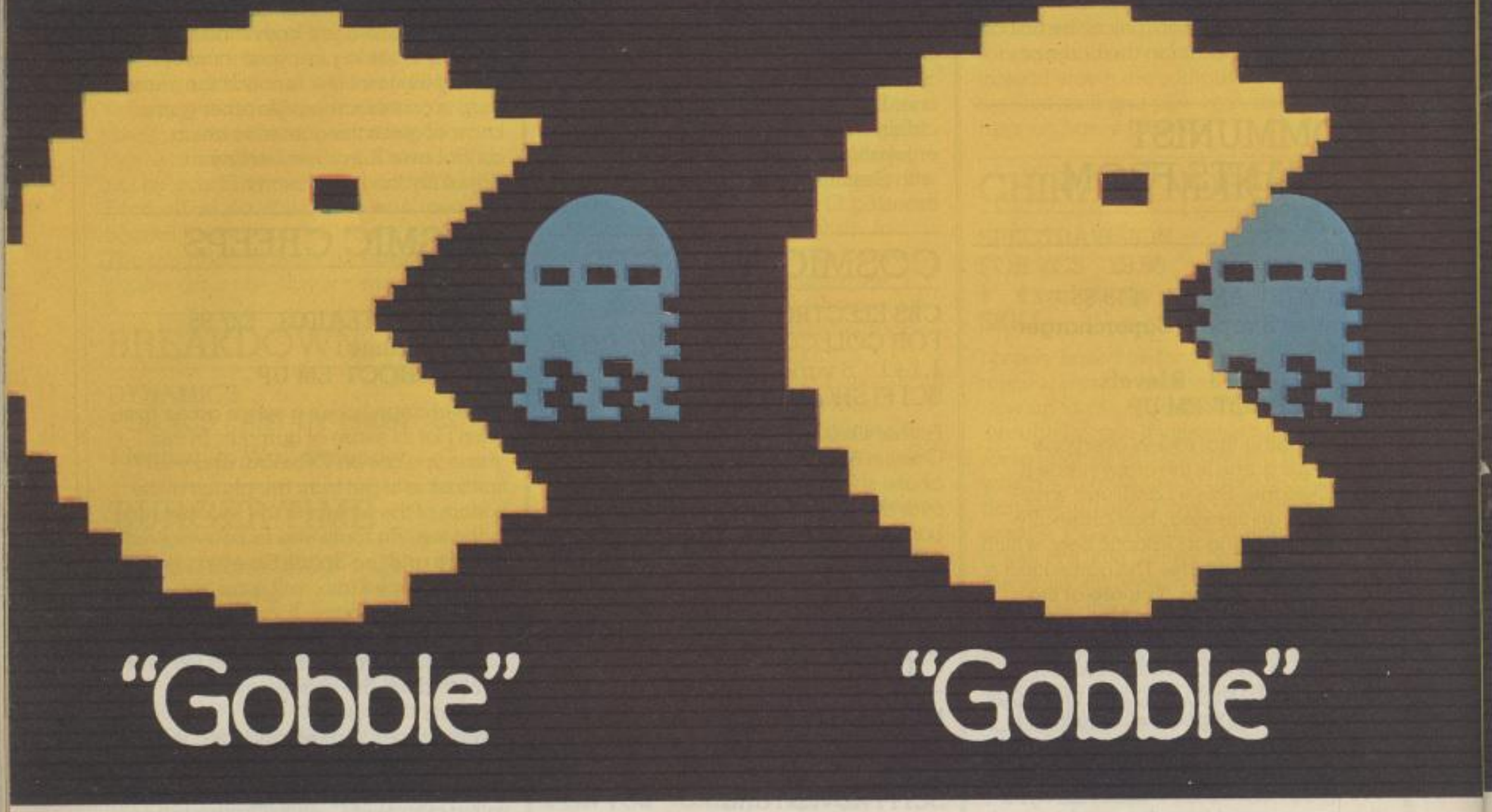
SPECTRAVISION
FOR VCS SA203 £9.95
1,1+1 4 variations
SCI FI SHOOT 'EM UP

Cross Force is a shoot 'em up with a difference. Instead of having one ship on screen you have two – one top, one bottom. Your laser fire comes from both ships so that you have a laser wall. With this weapon you must destroy all the aliens that are being deposited by the Mothership (which you can't destroy). This game requires skill because, as the Cross Force laser system is in experimental stages, the laser will overheat if used too much. You are given a laser temperature gauge so that you are not left in the lurch. A good and worthwhile addition to any space gamer's library.□

DEMOLITION HERBY

TELESYS
FOR VCS £27.95
1,1+1 2 variations
SKILL

This is for fans of Parker's Amidar as the basic idea and skills are the same. The



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ATARISOFT™

1982 ▽TRADEMARK AND © OF TAITO AMERICA CORP. ◇TRADEMARK AND © WILLIAMS ELECTRONICS INC. 1982. ™TRADEMARK OF ATARI INC. ®ATARI AND DESIGN, BATTLE ZONE, REG U.S. PAT. AND TM OFF.

playfield scrolls vertically and takes up approximately three screens. The Gorilla/Paint roller has been replaced by a car and the Guards/Pigs have been replaced by more cars. Quite a good game.□

DIG DUG

ATARI
FOR VCS CX2677 £29.95
1,1+1 2 variations
SKILL
Winter '83

A very popular game in the arcades and with Atari 400/800 Computer owners. It involves Underground treasure collecting of, for all things, vegetables. Two characters generally disrupt your activities, namely Fygar the Dragon and Fooka, an animated Balloon. You can either shoot them or drop boulders on them. Unusual, certainly, and worth considering if space games are boring you.□

DONKEY KONG

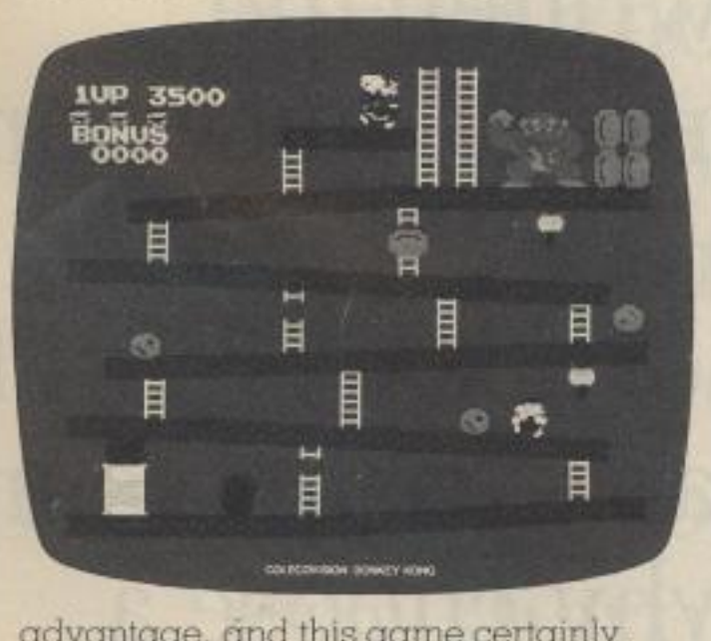
CBS ELECTRONICS
FOR VCS COL75259 £29.95
1 single game

FOR COLECO
Free with console

FOR INTELLIVISION COL 76257
£29.95
1,1+1 4 variations

CLIMBING

This is the game that comes free with the Colecovision when you buy it. Naturally, they have chosen a cartridge that shows off the system to good



advantage, and this game certainly does that. The game is based on the arcade game by Ninetendo, which has almost a cult following in America. The Kong in the title is King Kong, by the way, and the idea of the game is to guide a little character called Mario to the top of a skyscraper to rescue his girlfriend from Kong's clutches. To do this he has to climb scaffolding around the building. However, all the time little Mario is climbing up, Kong is busy throwing barrels down. Mario has to jump over them ... or you start again with another little Mario!

The resemblance of the Coleco version to the coin-op original is quite staggering, and although CBS Electronics make versions of this game for both Atari and Intellivision, neither of them are comparable in quality. A firm favourite with young and old gamers alike – and set to stay that way, too!□

DONKEY KONG JNR

CBS ELECTRONICS
FOR COLECO £29.95
1,1+1 8 variations
CLIMBING

If you're just expecting a revamped version of the original then you're mistaken. Donkey Kong Jnr turns the tables on the original. Kong has been captured by Mario (who is now the villain), so it's up to Kong's nappy-clad offspring to rescue his deal ol' dad. To do this he must go through three different screens, swinging on vines, chains and ropes, whilst avoiding the treacherous Snapjaws. Enchanting graphics help to make this a truly captivating game for the whole family.□

DRACULA

IMAGIC
FOR INTELLIVISION IM10607
£29.95
1,1+1,1v1 3 variations
ADVENTURE

If you're a fan of all those horror movies with vampires in them then this game is for you. You portray the Prince of Darkness, Dracula. As Count Dracula you can transform yourself into a bat and change your victims into zombies that will attack the local police who pursue you with wooden stakes. You must keep the Count's blood supply topped up as he will die if you do not. Altogether a challenging and enjoyable game.□

DRAGONFIRE

IMAGIC
FOR VCS IA3611 £27.95
1,1+1 4 variations

FOR INTELLIVISION IM10579
£29.95
1,1+1 3 variations

ADVENTURE SKILL

The adventure game has two main phases. First you have to run along the drawbridge ducking and jumping flaming arrows. Past the drawbridge, you enter a room containing treasure as well as an evil Dragon which can kill you with one puff.

Once you've collected all the treasure a door appears, opening onto another drawbridge which leads to a further treasure room. A great cartridge, featuring good graphics, sound and play value.□

DRAGONSTOMPER

STARPATH
FOR VCS AR4400 £19.95
1 single game
ADVENTURE
Requires Starpath Supercharger
£39.95

This is the only traditional Adventure game to come from Starpath for the Supercharger. One of the most striking things about it is the fact that, as well as using graphics in the usual way, it also has text which informs you what is happening and tells you what youhave in your possession.

The first load of this "Multi-Load Game" puts you in a countryside which is riddled with trees and swamps and pits and castles. You have to travel round this scrolling area fighting off several different types of creature. Some will give you useful objects and some won't. Once you've picked up everything you need you can go for the bridge. There you must hand over your ID or 600 gold pieces (it's best to give up the ID if you can find it).

Next comes the second load which puts you in the oppressed village where you must buy provisions at the store, medicines from the hospital and spells from the magic shop. Then, after recruiting some help, you enter the dragon's cave. This is chocablock with all manner of booby traps and other assorted nasties. Eventually you come up against the dragon who has stolen the magic amulet. The choice is either to slay him or steal the amulet and rehabilitate the dragon.

On Dragonmaster the Supercharger definitely comes into its own. Starpath should concentrate more on this kind of game and not on single screen skill games which companies like Atari are so much better at. All the adventure gamers who played this cartridge found it challenging fun, and humorous in places. The combination of text and graphics makes the game both realistic and easy to understand. The text informs you of what is happening and tells you what you have in your possession. If you're an adventure gamer than this one is for you.□

DREAM FLIGHT

GOLIATH
FOR VCS 83-215 £14.95
1 single game
CLIMBING

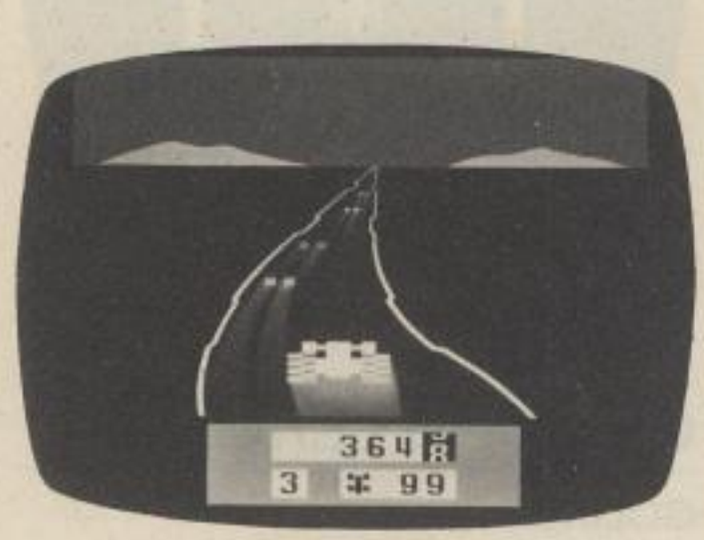
A helicopter hovers above and your aim is to climb aboard via its rope ladder. First you have to shin up various moving poles and then catch hold of the rope. There are various obstacles in your way including Snakes, Balloons and ex-Demon Attack Birds who've found their way onto another cartridge. This has that quality that only a few

possess – it is both easy to grasp yet difficult to master. Recommended.□

ENDURO

ACTIVISION
FOR VCS EAX026 £29.95
1 single game
DRIVING

If you thrill to Indy 500 then Enduro will knock your socks off. Not only is the road seen in perspective – day and night are automatically reproduced on the screen. You're given a set number of



cars to pass in a day to qualify for the next day. Without a doubt the best driving game for the VCS to date.□

ESCAPE FROM THE MINDMASTER

STARPATH
FOR VCS AR4200 £19.95
1 single game
ADVENTURE
Requires Starpath Supercharger
£29.95

You have been captured by the Mindmaster who has dropped you into a series of mazes. You are given two views of these, the main one a 3D type view depicting what you would see if you were walking through the maze – the graphics here are really good. The second one is birds-eye view which resembles the display on ordinary maze games.

You have to find your way through each maze while picking up different shaped objects and putting them into the correct holes. Also you must avoid an alien that has been out into the maze in order to catch you out.

Only once you've put all the shapes into all the holes (there are five to a maze) can you walk up the staircase to the next level and the next maze which is more complicated and has trickier shapes to find. In all you have six mazes to get through and each has a separate skill test which, if you're good, will boost your score and an assessment of how well (or how badly) you did.

"The Mindmaster deems you to be quaint!" and "The Mindmaster deems you to be promising!" are two of the possible results. This game is a first class piece of software for the VCS and one very strongly recommended.□

FAST FOOD

TELESYS
FOR VCS TEA1002 £27.95
1 single game
SKILL

Telesys seem to specialise in out-of-the ordinary games, and this one is no exception. Fast Food involves you steering a big red mouth around the screen gobbling up hamburgers, hot dogs, milk shakes etc, for points (which correspond to their calorie value). But there is a catch. At all costs you must avoid eating red pickles as they cause indigestion and, if you eat more than five, you burp to death! A fast game with good graphics.□

FATHOM

IMAGIC
FOR VCS £27.95
1 single game
ADVENTURE SKILL

An underwater odyssey. The goal is to rescue a Mermaid Princess from her cage at the bottom of the sea. To succeed you must recover the three sections of King Neptune's trident which are hidden, not only in the water but also in the skies. You have two different guises; a Dolphin and a Seagull. To transform yourself from one to another you must find the corresponding symbol.

During the game you are given points for bumping into Sea Horses and

friendly clouds but points are deducted for bumping into Crows, Squids and Black Clouds. It's unusual but it bears all the familiar hallmarks of Imagic's games. A simple challenging concept with good graphics that needs very nimble fingers on a good joystick.□

FELIX RETURN

GOLIATH
FOR VCS 83-116 £14.95
1 single game
CHILDRENS

There are close similarities to Smurf here – you must get from A to B, jumping obstacles as you go. The programmer has been resourceful in using the Atari's rather limited memory capacity and has managed to put Jack (or is it Felix?) through numerous interesting screen backgrounds.

It's obviously directed towards younger gamers. Not only that – my ten-year-old sister beat me at this one and seemed to enjoy her revenge.□

FIREBALL

STARPATH
FOR VCS AR4300 £15.95
1,1+1 5 games
SKILL
Requires Starpath Supercharger
£29.95

Basically Fireball is a collection of Breakout type games featuring better graphics and more complicated play. And, the Supercharger's extra memory makes it the best game of this kind.

The traditional bat has been replaced by a little man who has the ability to both catch and throw the fireballs that he uses to knock holes in the walls. There are five different games on this cassette; Firetrap, Marching Blocks, Nock A Block, Migrating Blocks and Cascade. All are very similar to other Breakout games but designed more stylishly and with a bit more humour. This is certainly not one of the best games TV Gamer has tried for the Supercharger and it is not worth payiung the initial outlay for the charger just for this game. Nevertheless, a challenging and entertaining addition to anyone's game cassette library.□

FLIPPER/PINBALL

MB ELECTRONICS
FOR VECTREX 8133 £24.95
1,1+1 single game
SKILL

All the regular pinball features are here: flippers, rollovers, drop targets etc. You also have the ability to nudge the ball

but – watch it – you can also tilt (for those who didn't mis-spend their youth that means render the ball in play useless). It lacks the changing screens of Mattel Pinball but few real pin tables have them anyway.

Amazing how well a pinball table converts to Vector Graphics. I thought it was going to be a dismal effort and was pleasantly surprised.□

FOREST

GOLIATH
FOR VCS 83-315 £14.95
1 single game
SKILL

This game looks to me as if it's come from the same programmer as Jumping Jack. (This time you're a girl – Jumping Jackie perhaps!) You have to walk through three screens by jumping over various farmyard animals. Judging by the speed they move at these animals are probably rocket-powered. Once you've made it you chop down a tree infested by snakes. A good game but not up to Jumping Jack's standard.□

FORTRESS OF NARZOD

See 'Tanks' Feature

FROGGER

PARKER
FOR INTELLIVISION 941502
£27.95
1,1+1 4 variations

FOR COLECOVISION £29.95
1,1+1 8 variations

FOR VCS 931402 £29.95
1,1+1 6 variations

FOR ATARI COMPUTER £29.95
1,1+1 6 variations

CHILDREN'S SKILL

Based on the popular arcade game by Sega. The idea is to get the Frog across the road and the river before your time runs out. Your path is riddled with such obstacles as Cars, Lorries, Snakes, Logs and the treacherous Crocodile that will rear its ugly head to swallow up your Frog. A nice game for fans of the arcade version, and for all those who like humorous games that are both easy to grasp yet remain challenging to the veteran. The Intellivision game play and graphics are similar but the sound is inferior to the VCS cartridge.□

GALACTIC

GOLIATH
FOR VCS 83-416 £14.95
1,1+1 2 variations
SCI FI SHOOT 'EM UP

A Demon Attack type game in which you must shoot all the Aliens that swoop down after you. There are no special features such as shields or guided fire but, at a fraction of the cost of Imagic's Demon Attack, it should prove a good buy.□

GALAXIAN

ATARI

FOR ATARI COMPUTER £29.95

FOR VCS CX2684 £29.99
1 9 games
SCI FI SHOOT 'EM UP

A highly successful arcade game that has enjoyed long stretches at number two in both Replay and Play Meter magazines' coin-op chart. By game standards (where five years is ancient history) it is quite an old timer, a sort of follow up to Space Invaders. There are a batch of Alien Starships all in a rectilinear formation. They stay at the same height on the screen but smaller groups split off from the main group and swoop down toward your Battlestar Galactica type space ship at the bottom of the screen. Apart from that the game is basically a souped up, faster-paced version of Space Invaders. However, the graphics are much better and for those who are still great fans of the game it's a good game to upgrade to when even game 16 on SI is no real problem for you.□

GANGSTER ALLEY

SPECTRAVISION
FOR VCS SA201 £19.95
1,1+1 4 variations
SHOOT 'EM UP

This is a shooting gallery game in which you have to shoot all the gangsters as they peep out of the windows. Nicely done but a bit boring after a while.□

GORF

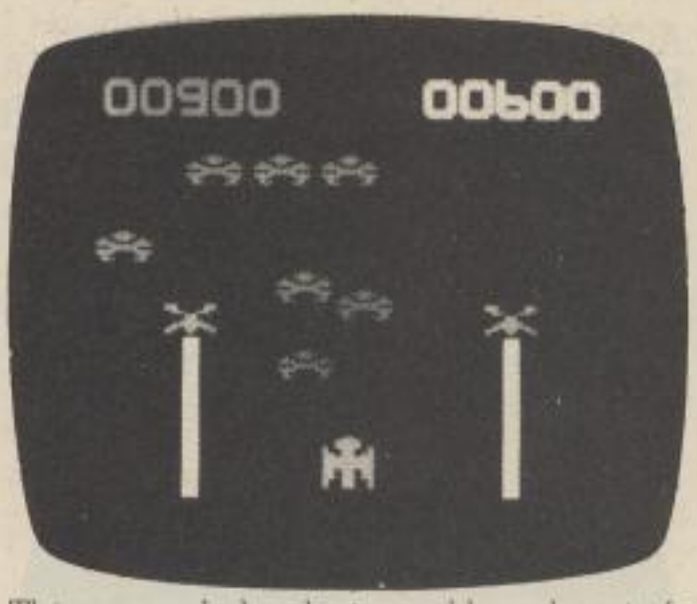
CBS ELECTRONICS
FOR VCS COL75344 £29.95

FOR INTELLIVISION COL76349
£29.95

FOR COLECO COL74344 £29.95

1,1+1 8 variations
SCI FI SHOOT 'EM UP

Based on the highly popular arcade coin-op by Bally/Midway, the people responsible for Galaxian and Pac-Man. This game starts off with you at the bottom of the screen being attacked by Space Invaders which have to be destroyed in the usual manner. Next you are confronted by a small batch of five spaceships, one of which fires long laser beams at you while the others dive bomb you. If you survive you go on to Warp Attack in which a group of TIE Fighters spiral towards you from what appears to be a black hole. Finally you come face to face with the flagship itself.



This can only be destroyed by a burst of laser fire in exactly the right spot. If you succeed in all these tasks you start again on a higher skill level than before. Certainly a very challenging game.□

GROUND ZERO

GOLIATH
FOR VCS £14.95
1 single game
COMBAT SHOOT 'EM UP

Distinct similarities to Activision's River Raid here but the strategy is less interesting and the price is lower. Instead of a river we're offered a sea chilled with a menacing selection of Icebergs and enemy 'jets' which fly on propellor power. Apart from that the features are pretty familiar.□

HYPERCHASE

MB ELECTRONICS
FOR VECTREX 8128 £19.95
1,1+1 2 variations
DRIVING

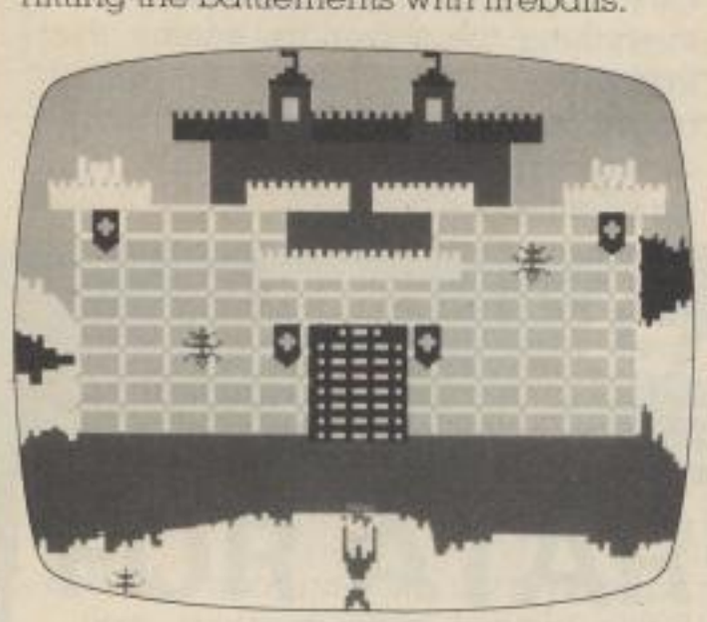
Hyperchase is the Vectrex equivalent to Atari's Night Driver and Coleco's Turbo. You are in the driving seat of a racing-car, pitted against winding roads and other cars. The only real problem

with this game to start with is the over-responsiveness of the joystick, which only needs the most delicate of twiddles to send the car across to the other side of the road. As with Turbo the scene changes throughout the game. The angle of the road alters too, and steering requires skill. Some nice graphic touches are used and the sound effects of third and fourth gear are quite convincing. On the whole an absorbing game, although Vector graphics are less realistic than Raster graphics on car games.□

ICE TREK

IMAGIC
FOR INTELLIVISION IM10582
£29.95
1 6 variations
ADVENTURE

This game is set in frozen wastes long ago back in the age of Sword and Sorcery. Vali the Avenger must retrieve the great Northern Lights from the Ice Castle. To do this he must first dodge the Ice Goddess Caribou. He must then make an ice bridge from icebergs floating past (by far the most infuriating phase), then he is up against the ice castle itself. The aim is to melt this by hitting the battlements with fireballs.



After that it's on to the next level which is the same only harder. A refreshingly different game.□

JAWBREAKER

TIGERVISION
FOR VCS TIA0002 £27.95
1 single game
MAZE

As the title suggests, this is a Pac-Man clone. The big difference is the graphic quality which is actually better than Atari Pac-Man. Nice humourous touches include a big toothbrush which cleans Jawbreaker's teeth between rounds.□

JUNGLE HUNT

ATARI
FOR VCS CX2688 £24.95
1,1+1 single game
SKILL

This is based on Atari's coin-op of the same name. The game is in several phases. First you have to swing on vines to get across a section of scrolling screen. You then have to swim through a crocodile-infested river, killing crocs as you go and surfacing for air. Having survived that you have to get past a number of large and small boulders, some of which you must jump and some you must dodge. Next comes the ultimate objective when you must outwit the cannibal warrior in order to save the princess. Atari have made good use of the graphics and sound in this game. All-in-all, a good game with a nail-biting story line.□

KANGAROO

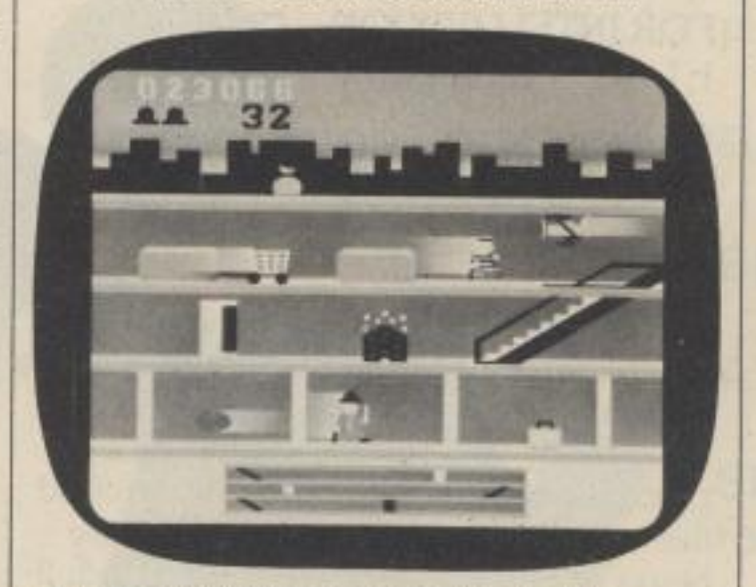
ATARI
FOR VCS CX2689 £24.95
1,1+1
CLIMBING

This is basically Atari's own answer to Donkey Kong. Kong is replaced by a group of evil chimps; Mario is now a mother Kangaroo who's trying to get back her Joey (baby kangaroo). She has to clear three separate screens to succeed. Along the way she can punch the chimps as well as the fruit they hurl in her path. The graphics are pretty good and, although it looks simple, it is deceptively difficult. Well worth looking at.□

KEYSTONE KAPERS

ACTIVISION
FOR VCS EAX026 £29.95
1 4 variations
CLIMBING

A cops and robbers chase through a department store is the zany theme of Keystone Kapers. You take the part of the Keystone Kop and the aim of the



game is to chase your robber (who comes complete with stripey jumper and mask) along four floors of a store connected by lifts and escalators that move in only one direction – up. The robber, obviously not wanting to be caught, lays traps for the Kop such as bouncing beach balls, shopping carts and low flying model planes. Graphically a nice game but it's soon mastered and would become boring before long.□

KILLER SATELLITES

STARPATH
FOR VCS AR4103 £15.95
1,1+1 9 variations
SCI FI SHOOT 'EM UP
Requires Starpath Supercharger
£29.95

This game is like a cross between Defender and Missile Command. The object is to fly across a horizontally scrolling screen, shooting down bombs as they fall towards skyscrapers on earth. This isn't as simple as it sounds, since you have to contend with a multitude of explosives. Not an easy game to get on with at first, but once you become more adept, you'll probably find it rather fun. Certainly worth investigating.□

KING KONG

TIGERVISION
FOR VCS TIA0001 £27.95
1 single game
CLIMBING

A rather weak attempt at Donkey Kong. The graphics are inferior and there is only one screen rather than two as in the CBS/VCS version. Not a good game. Tigervision's Pac-Man tip off is much better.□

LABRINTH

See 'Tanks' Feature

LADY BUG

CBS ELECTRONICS
FOR COLECO COL74328 £29.95
1,1+1 8 variations
MAZE

A run of the mill Pac-Man-type game but with a difference. Some of the walls are hinged and will move if pushed by your Lady Bug, so you can if you like change the maze – or better still, block off your pursuers. Worth buying if you're desperate for Pac-Man on Coleco.□

LOOPING

CBS ELECTRONICS
FOR COLECO COL74269 £29.95
1,1+1 8 variations
SKILL SHOOT 'EM UP

One of the better scrolling shoot 'em ups around and quite superior to Cosmic Avenger. You're pilot of a small fighter and initially you must destroy a missile to open a gate into a maze of pipes. Your objective is to dock with the word END which appears after the maze. Hot air balloons fly into your path and, to avoid collisions, you must shoot them. Recommended for people who want more stimulation than the average shoot 'em up.□

MAFIA

GOLIATH
FOR VCS .£14.95
1,1+1 33 variations
SCI FI SHOOT 'EM UP

This name is quite a mystery – there's nothing remotely connected with the Mafia in the content. In fact, it's a close relation to Atari's Missile Command. The ICBM's have been replaced by Space Invaders but the game is virtually the same in all other respects.□

MAGIC PUZZLE

GOLIATH
FOR VCS 83-115 £14.95
1 single game
SKILL

There are very few Rubik Cube-type puzzles in a TV game format. This one involves a 3 x 3 matrix of dice on screen which are all turned in sequence so that all the dice have the same top number facing forwards. It looks and sounds simple but, like all good puzzles, it's deceptively tricky. Probably the best video puzzle game around but probably launched too late as puzzles like this have gone right out of fashion.□

MINESTORM

MB ELECTRONICS
FOR VECTREX Included in console
1,1+1 1 variation
SCI FI SHOOT 'EM UP

This is the game built in to the Vectrex console and is very similar to the arcade version of Asteroids. Your ship starts off in the centre of the screen and your task is to destroy a number of mines drifting about. The control is much the same as the arcade version except that a joystick replaces the rotate buttons. Each time you clear one sheet of mines, you are sent to the next, with the mines increasing in number and difficulty. Great skill is needed to get beyond level seven or so. Both challenging and impressive to look at, this is probably the best game to come with a console to date. A game that should have long lasting appeal.□

MISSILE CONTROL

VIDEO GEMS
FOR VCS 2122 £14.95
1 6 games
SCI FI SHOOT 'EM UP

In many ways, this game is similar to Atari's Missile Command. Your mission is to protect six cities from the missiles that are fired at them and to do this you are given a missile laser base. Missile control goes beyond Missile Command in that you must destroy alien spacecraft that hide behind force shields. In addition you are given force shields from which you can bounce your missiles. This means that you are kept on the go right from the beginning. All in all quite a challenging game to come from the recently formed Video Gems company and certainly worth considering if you're a Missile Command fan.□

MISSILE WAR

GOLIATH
FOR VCS 83-312 £14.95
1 single game
SCI FI SHOOT 'EM UP

This one is best described as Mattel's Astrosmash turned through 90 degrees. You fly from left to right shooting boulders and UFOs that come from right to left. You must destroy everything before it reaches your side of the screen (otherwise you either crash or lose points). Not a bad theme but it gets somewhat boring after a while.□

MISSION X

MATTEL ELECTRONICS
FOR INTELLIVISION 4437 £25.95
1 4 variations
COMBAT

Based on an arcade game of the same name. The object of the game is to fly your secret bomber over enemy territory and bomb everything you encounter – battleships, tanks, artillery guns, bridges, trains – all of which will come into view as the screen scrolls vertically. Great game for all those who enjoy B17 Bomber.□

MOUSETRAP

CBS ELECTRONICS
FOR VCS COL75291 £29.95
1,1+1 single game

FOR INTELLIVISION £29.95
1,1+1 single game

FOR COLECO COL74294 £29.95
1,1+1 8 variations

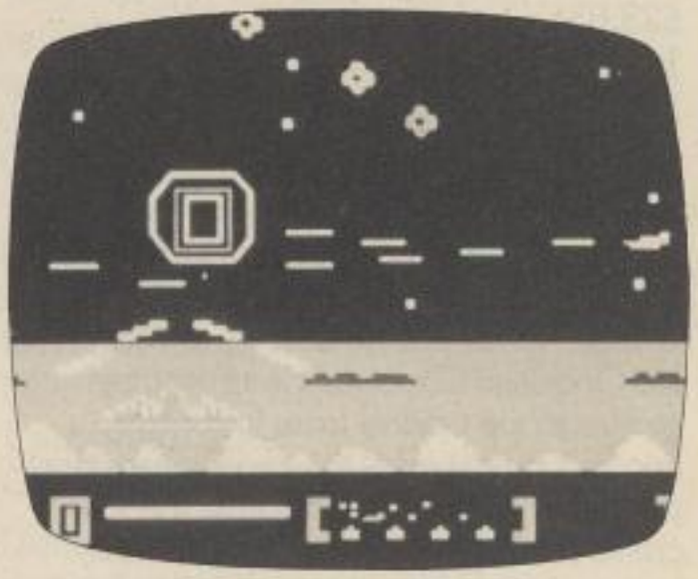
MAZE

A Pac-Man-type game, although of a much higher calibre, which comes accompanied by an up tempo melody that's really very good. In Pac-Man's place is a little mouse that zooms around the maze eating cheese crumbs, while being chased by some cats and a bird. If the mouse eats a bone, he turns into a dog and can chase the cats. This game runs rings round Pac-Man.□

NOVA BLAST

IMAGIC
FOR INTELLIVISION IM7609
£29.95
1,1+1 3 variations
SCI FI SHOOT 'EM UP

Compared with other systems, nowhere near the same amount of good space software is available for the Intellivision. Of the ones that are on offer many are rather slow and awkward to control. So Nova Blast comes as a pleasant surprise. It is a Defender/Missile command-type game in which you have to pilot a Novon Sky Sweeper across the arid terrain of the planet. The primary objective is to prevent your four cities from being obliterated by such nasties as Gravitines and Astro Sailors. Armaments consist of a forward laser cannon, which is the fastest weapon on any Intelivision craft to date, as well as bombs which are dropped on enemy tanks in later rounds. The impressive aspect of this game is the speed of



everything; the player, the enemy, the laserfire and the explosions are well above par for Intellivision. Imagic deserve a pat on the back for an excellent space game.□

OVERKILL

GOLIATH
FOR VCS 83-114 £14.95
1 single game
COMBAT

Basically a variation on Atari's Air Sea Battle, but with better graphics – you use your plane to shoot and bomb jets and enemy boats. However, this is not just a mindless shoot 'em up – you have to be careful not to shoot your side's ships as that loses valuable points. Not a bad game for the price and one that should appeal to those who are a bit fed up with shooting space ships.□

PAC KONG

GOLIATH
FOR VCS 83-414 £14.95
1 single game
CLIMBING

Sooner or later this cross-bred mutant had to appear and here he is. Advance your hero to the top of the screen while avoiding the little ghosts who are running around trying to knock him off the girders. Unfortunately his reason for climbing to the top is a mystery – there's no girlfriend waiting for his rescue. So why does he make this valiant effort – we should be told.□

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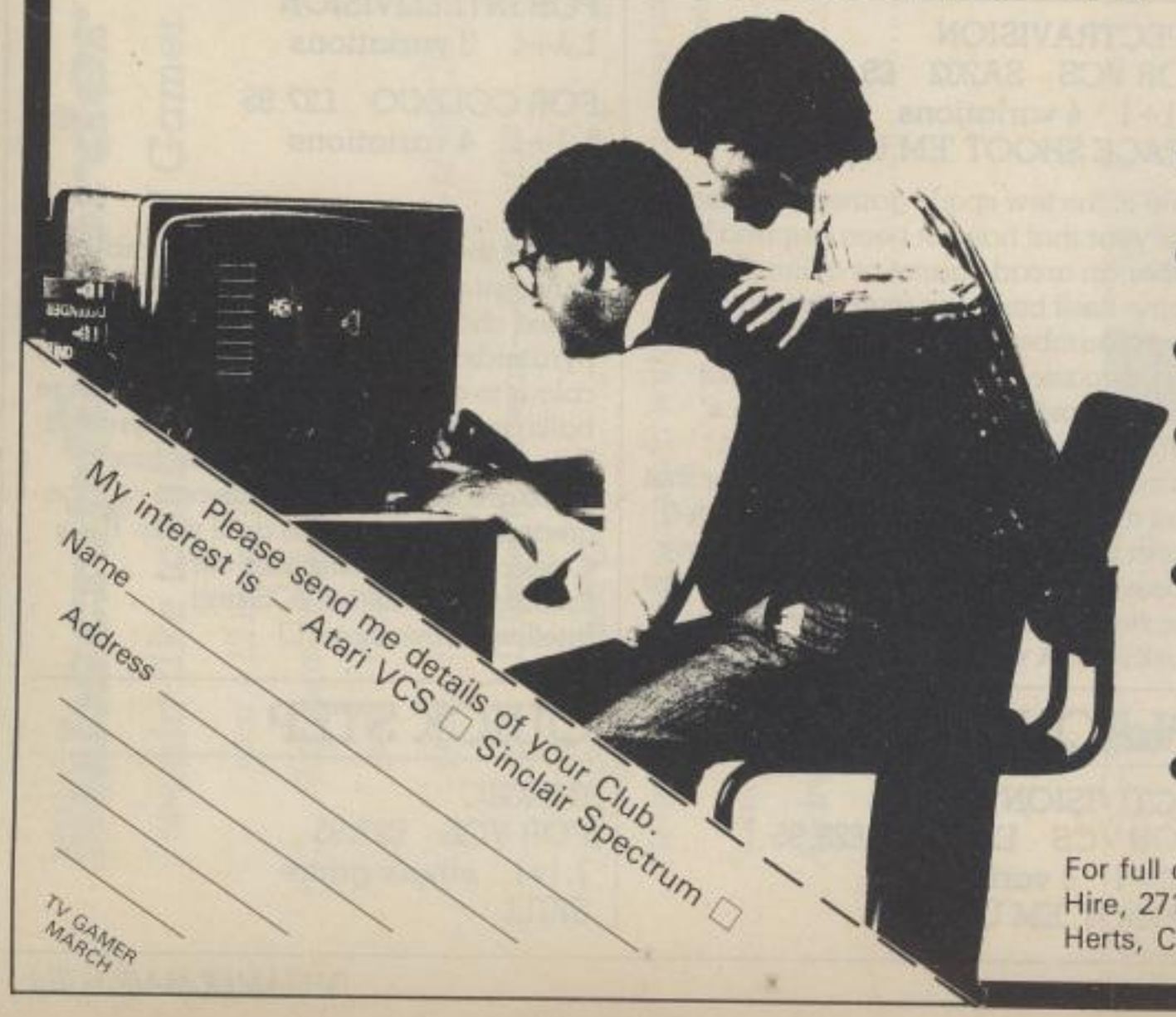

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PEPPER II

CBS ELECTRONICS
FOR COLECO COL74279 £29.95
1,1+1 8 variations
MAZE

One of the most meaningless game titles around! The idea is to run around the tracks filling in the squares (in a similar way to Amidar). But in this game you have to complete your mazes on different screens at one time. A good game of its kind but pretty repetitive after a while.□

PHASER PATROL

STARPATH
FOR VCS AR4000
1 1 single game
SCI FI SHOOT 'EM UP
Comes free with Starpath Supercharger £29.95

This is the game that comes with the revolutionary Supercharger. It is basically a Star Raiders game with all the familiar features; galactic chart, long range scan, battle computer, damage computer and good old starbases. The idea is to rid your quadrant space of all enemy fighters. The graphics – which have to be seen to be believed – are by far the best of any Star Raiders-type game. In fact, in just about every way Phaser Patrol is superior to the competition; sound, graphics, ease of operation and so on are all so much better than VCS Star Raiders, Star Voyager or Starmaster. However, at £39.95 for the Supercharger, the best space game around for the VCS does not come cheap. Even so, this initial outlay can soon be covered once a couple of Supercharger tapes are bought. In short try it, you'll like it.□

PHOENIX

ATARI
FOR VCS CX2673 £29.99
1 single game
SCI FI SHOOT 'EM UP

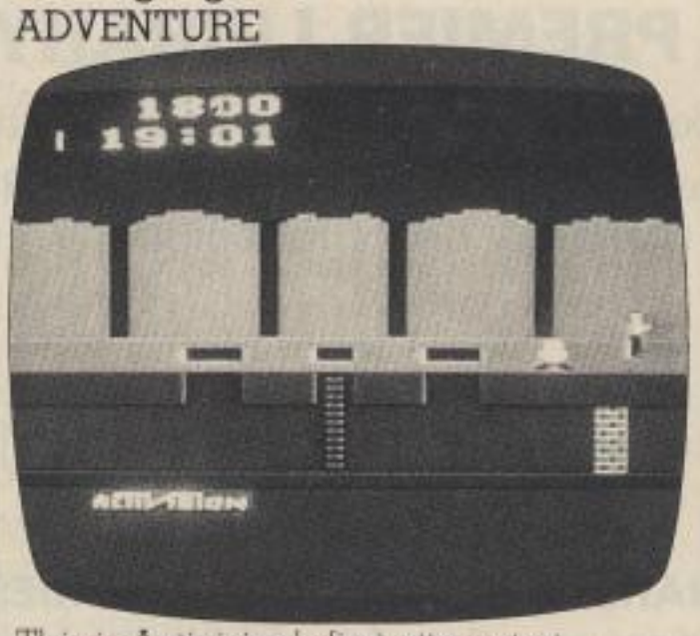
This arcade smash hit is the theme of last year's Atari UK and World Championships. The general idea is to blast as many birds as possible with your Sand Crawler although, unlike such games as Space Invaders or Galaxian, you are given some variety in game play. You start off with small birds that can be picked off without too much bother. After two waves you move on to bigger birds which need to be shot in the middle to be destroyed (although you can wing them). You are then confronted with the mothership which is quite complex to deal with. The idea is to get the pilot who is seated in the centre, and to do this you must shoot first through the base and then through the scrolling central part. You then wait for the hole you made to come round again so that you can blast him. But you've got to be careful, because not only does he fire back but the ship gets lower and lower. This should certainly appeal to Demon Attack lovers as it is a first rate game of this type.□

PITFALL

ACTIVISION
FOR VCS AX18 £29.95

FOR INTELLIVISION MP002 £24.95

1 single game
ADVENTURE



This is Activision's first attempt at adventure games and it has a decidedly tropical theme to it. You are Pitfall Harry, a jungle explorer and treasure pick up all the treasure he can find along his route whilst avoiding scorpions, rattlesnakes, crocodiles, logs and tar pits. To do this several skills must be learnt such as hopping crocodile heads and swinging on vines.

Pitfall is certainly one of the best adventure games currently on the market, offering 256 different screen settings.□

PLANET PATROL

SPECTRAVISION
FOR VCS SA202 £9.95
1,1+1 4 variations
SPACE SHOOT 'EM UP

One of the few space games released this year that has not been inspired by either an arcade game or a film. The game itself has been well thought out and a number of skills are required for you to master it fully. You must shoot down as many as you can of T.I.A.s (Troublesome Invading Aliens) that came up against you head on. After that you must rescue the crew of a stranded Earth fighter, then destroy three enemy bases in order to contine – and that's just the start. You then take on the enemy in darkness. A very good space game.□

PLAQUE ATTACK

ACTIVISION
FOR VCS EAX027 £29.95
1,1+1 4 variations
SHOOT 'EM UP

A simple shoot 'em up game but one with a moral (and dental!) message. A mouth is the setting and the attack is mounted by sweets and other tooth-destroyers. You are armed with a tube of toothpaste to zap the sweets, but if one of them touches one of your teeth then that tooth disappears. Steve Cartwright designed this 'game with a message' but, in concept it's rather too similar to Megamania, one of his previous hits.□

POLE POSITION

ATARI

FOR ATARI COMPUTER
1 4 skill levels

FOR VCS CX2694 £29.95
1 Single game
DRIVING

If you've seen this game as a Coin Op you'll know how good the graphics are and appreciate the difficulties involved in translating it for the VCS. However, a surprisingly good conversation has been done. The basic idea is to steer your formula one racer around a treacherous circuit.

Firstly you have to qualify by scoring over 10000 points. You can then enter the race. The graphics don't match the coin-op for quality but they're superb in comparison with other VCS car games like Night Driver or Indy 500.□

Q*BERT

PARKER
FOR VCS
1,1+1 6 variations

FOR ATARI COMPUTER
1,1+1 6 variations

FOR INTELLIVISION
1,1+1 3 variations

FOR COLECO £27.95
1,1+1 4 variations

SKILL

One of the few original arcade spin-offs in recent months. Q*Bert is a little long-nosed character who jumps around on pyramids, changing the blocks from one colour to another. He must avoid orange balls as they bounce down the pyramid. This is not the only peril Q*Bert faces – there are all manner of different orange creatures for our pal to deal with. The Coleco version compares very favourably with the VCS and Intellivision versions.□

QUICK STEP

IMAGIC
FOR VCS £27.95
1,1v1 single game
SKILL

No, there's no ballroom involved despite the title, nor does the action involve dancers of any description.

A squirrel and a kangaroo sit on a matrix of coloured squares. The idea is to bounce around on the squares, changing them to your colour while trying to get rid of a pesky opponent who can and will turn any of the squares to his colour (including the ones you've changed).

Big points are scored when squares of your colour disappear from the bottom of the screen. To complicate matters, magic squares also appear at random on the matrix, allowing anyone who lands on it to freeze their adversary in his, or her, tracks. Disappearances off screen mean loss of life so you must be on the move continually to survive. In later rounds you are not given such a tidy grid of squares – some are missing and, if you're not careful, this can leave you stranded.

You can also drop your assailant in it by using mines to make their squares vanish. If used wisely these can be very effective. Although it can appear a bit childish this game can pack quite a challenge. It requires hyper-fast thinking and a really mean joystick. Recommended.□

RAM IT

TELESYS
FOR VCS £27.95
1,1+1 2 variations
SKILL

An original concept. Your task is to blast horizontal coloured bars back to their starting point with a laser gun which moves up and down the centre of the screen. The graphics and sound are functional, rather than good.□

REALSPORTS SOCCER

ATARI
FOR VCS CX2667 £29.95
1,1+1 4 variations
SPORT

Atari's second attempt at British-style football, their first try being Pele Championship Soccer which was later renamed Pele soccer. The biggest difference between the two is in the direction of scrolling. Realsports Soccer scrolls horizontally whereas Pele Scrolled vertically (Pele Soccer has now been officially phased out to make way for this latest version). The on-screen players are more realistically produced but it's a great pity that Atari have left out the fireworks which followed each goal in the original version. Other than that it's just football.

Of course, it's debatable whether people will pay nearly £30 for a game that, for next to nothing, they can play in their back garden. We shall see.□

REALSPORTS TENNIS

ATARI
FOR VCS CX2680 £29.95
1,1+1 2 variations
SPORTS

If you're keen on tennis then this game is a good one to add to your library. It is much the same as Activision's Tennis only with refined graphics on the net and on the players' kit. Gameplay is pretty faithful to the official rules. This game possibly has a slight edge on the Activision version but then it is more expensive. Certainly if you're considering buying a tennis game think first about how much you actually want to pay – you may find you're better off with the older Activision cartridge.□

RIP OFF

MB ELECTRONICS
FOR VECTREX 8129 £19.95
1,2 8 variations
SCI FI SHOOT 'EM UP

Another coin-op translation, but one of the better ones. You are guarding a cluster of valuables that local space pirates want desperately and will stop at nothing to obtain. The pirates will sneak in, pick one up, try to sneak off with it and then come back for more. You don't lose lives as such, but the game ends when all the contaners have been swiped. A nice fast game with good graphics and sound but it doesn't have quite the same appeal as Scramble or Cosmic Chasm.□

RIVER RAID

ACTIVISION

FOR ATARI COMPUTER £29.95

FOR VCS AX020 £29.95

1,1+1 2 variations
COMBAT SHOOT 'EM UP

This is the first game by Activision's programmer Carol Shaw. In many respects it is a military, bird's eye view version of the game Scramble. The aim

is to use your yellow jet fighter to bomb as many enemy fuel depots, bridges, jets and other landmarks as possible as you swoop along the river. Your limited fuel supply is replenished only when you bomb fuel tanks. In short, an excellent game.□

SCRAMBLE

MB ELECTRONICS
FOR VECTREX 8129 £19.95
1 single game
SCI FI SHOOT 'EM UP

Named as the best Mini Arcade Videogame cartridge of 1982 by the US Electronic Games Magazine, Scramble is a faithful reproduction of the popular arcade game of the same name.

The aim is to shoot and bomb as many missiles, fuel tanks and camps as possible whilst you are on your way to the enemy HQ. There are five different phases to complete before you reach it, all posing very different problems. Destroying the HQ is by no means easy but can be done if you're skilful. This is by far the best game in this category around at the moment and it is the first cartridge you should buy if you're getting or already have a Vectrex.□

SEA MASTER

GOLIATH
FOR VCS 83-313 £14.95
1 single game
SHOOT 'EM UP

Nothing too stunning about this game. Basically a shoot 'em up set in the ocean rather than in space or on a battlefield.□

SEA QUEST

ACTIVISION
FOR VCS AX002 £29.95
1 single game
COMBAT SHOOT 'EM UP

In control of a mini-sub, your task is to rescue divers and destroy all the sharks, squids and even deep sea pirates that are out to get both the diver and the treasure he is seeking. You have a limited amount of oxygen so you regularly have to surface for a fresh supply. Steve Cartwright the designer (also responsible for such hits as Barnstorming and Megamania) has, as usual, paid careful attention to small details like the spinning propellors and the diver's kicking legs.□

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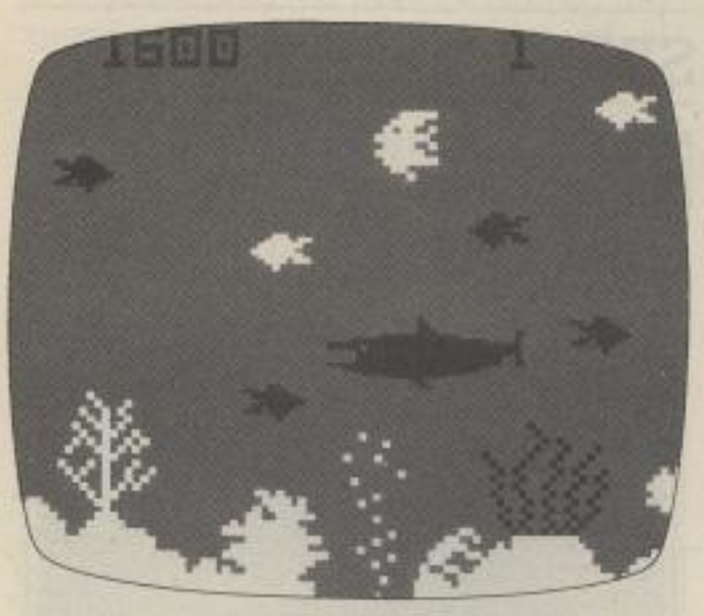
SHARK! SHARK!

MATTEL ELECTRONICS
FOR INTELLIVISION 5787 £22.95
1,2 2 games
SKILL

Tired of being a space buccaneer? Fancy being something different for a change? Well, here's your chance to be a goldfish. That's right – a goldfish. You have to be a pretty quick goldfish too.



Otherwise you'll end up as shark snack. The idea is to swim around avoiding fish bigger than yourself while you eat up all the smaller fry. After you have swallowed a quantity of smaller fish you get larger, as does the range of fish you eat. If you're feeling a bit daring, you can try and nibble the shark's tail – but be careful. If he turns round and bites you then you lose a life, and return to your original size.

If you are a bit fed up with space cartridges then this enjoyable, skilful game, which takes you into inner rather than outer space, is one for you.□

SHARP SHOT

MATTEL ELECTRONICS
FOR INTELLIVISION 5638 £21.95
1,1+1 4 variations
SHOOT 'EM UP

Not one, but four different shooting type games on one cartridge which is quite unusual for Mattel. All are basically simplified versions of some of their more popular games. One is based on Sea Battle, one on US Football, one on Space Battle and one on Cloudy Mountain, but all are a lot easier as they are designed for younger gamers.□

SKIN DIVER

GOLIATH
FOR VCS 83-415 £14.95
1 single game
SKILL

I don't like this game. Not because it's a bad game – it's just that I can't do it, and I don't know anyone who can. The idea is to jump off a boat into dangerous waters infested by sharks and other hungry foe. Harpoon as many of them as you can before the time runs out (you've got 60 seconds after you jump into the water). A gate opens if you spear enough of them and then you go through to the next level. At least that's what the instruction book says – I haven't actually seen it happen as yet. This one's for you if you like a challenge.□

SKYSCRAPER

GOLIATH
FOR VCS 83-415 £14.95
1,1+1 4 games
SCI FI SHOOT 'EM UP

Your mission is to shoot at various cities as you pass above them in your flying saucer. They retaliate by firing back and launching fighters against you. You can fire left, right and down in much the same way as you do in cosmic Ark as you shoot your way through a total of six different landscapes. Not a world beating game but well worth having a look at.□

SKY SKIPPER

PARKER
FOR VCS 931510 £27.95
1 3 games
SKILL

This game is based on Nintendo's popular coin-op of the same name. The idea of the game is to fly your bi-plane around the playfield knocking out gorillas and picking up rabbits, ducks, monkeys and doves from their cages. In other words it's one of those weird games following in the tradition of Amidar, also from Parker.

The play field is three screens high so, when you're flying around, it scrolls vertically. Although this is an entertaining well-presented game, after a while it could become a bit boring – especially if you get very good at it . All the same an ideal one for younger gamers.□

SMURF – RESCUE IN GARGAMELS CASTLE

CBS ELECTRONICS
FOR COLECO COL74260 £29.95
1,1+1 8 variations
CHILDREN'S ADVENTURE

This game is based on the highly popular TV characters. You have control of a little Smurf who must make the epic journey to Gargamels Castle to rescue an imprisoned Smurfette. Along the way you must jump gates and hills and duck to avoid bats. Both the graphics and sound on this game are marvellous. Children will love it.□

SOCCER/FOOTBALL

MB ELECTRONICS
FOR VECTREX 8135 £29.95
1,1+1 single game
SPORTS

This game's name may, alternatively, be Football/soccer when launched. But it certainly won't carry its US name – Heads Up. It's far better than their previous soccer game Blitz. On this one you've actually got a team of 'matchstick' players as opposed to the 'O's and 'X's in Blitz. You play on a horizontally scrolling pitch which is very similar to Mattel Intellivision Soccer (see

separate review). Quite a faithful reproduction of soccer which includes a challenging one player version.□

SOLAR QUEST

MB ELECTRONICS
FOR VECTREX 8121 £19.95
1,1+1 1 variation
SCI FI SHOOT 'EM UP

A space game which, refreshingly, involves a lot more than simply shooting everything in sight. Set in space, with a sun in the centre which can destroy all enemy craft. Once you destroy an enemy craft a small life pod remains. Picking this up is a great boost for your score.

Success requires complete mastery of the controls of your craft, as skilful manoeuvring can mean the difference between life and death. Certainly one of the better space games available for the Vectrex.□

SPACE FURY

CBS ELECTRONICS
FOR COLECO COL74330 £29.95
1,1+1 8 variations
SCI FI SHOOT 'EM UP

Visually superior to Asteroids with a hint of strategy to its credit. You start off

with a small triangular ship, as you do in Asteroids. You then have to pick off a wave of floating space creatures that tend to link together and go for you. If you destroy the wave you go through a docking sequence which features three outer shells. dock with one of them and boost your craft with extra firepower. The strategy comes in planning which craft you find the best for each individual wave (as each outer shell has its own characteristics). As this was originally a Vector scan game it has lost a certain something during translation (as Atari's Asteroids did). Nevertheless the game is a cut above the rest.□

SPACE PANIC

CBS ELECTRONICS
FOR COLECO COL74329 £29.95
1,1+1 8 variations
SCI FI CLIMBING

This was originally made for the Apple computer, with the name Apple Panic. An arcade game sprung from it and the Coleco version is a direct copy of the coin-op.

Guide your little spaceman around a maze of ladders, avoiding Aliens, until you have enough time to dig a hole for them to fall into.

In later rounds you get nastier Aliens - that only die after falling through up to four holes. the graphics aren't breathtaking but the game is very challenging indeed.□

SPACE RAIDER

GOLIATH
FOR VCS 83-211 £14.95
1 single game
SCI FI SHOOT 'EM UP

This game is a cross between Space Cavern and Demon Attack. In the usual shoot 'em up style, the idea is to destroy the aliens, which in this case are swooping, bird-like creatures that are attacking your laser base. However, the aliens involved here are craftier than those in Demon Attack because they can drop dangerous fireballs on the ground. As a countermeasure you are given a laser base that, as well as firing upwards, can also fire sideways. The graphics are quite well done, better than those in Demon Attack anyway. All in all a good game.□

SPACE ROBOT

GOLIATH
FOR VCS 83-412 £14.95
1 single game
SCI FI SHOOT 'EM UP

Originally a Zimag game called Cosmic Corridor. it's now resurfaced under this new title and brand name. The idea is to fly up or down shooting at the oncoming Aliens. A challenging game that's likely to stay that way.□

SPACE WARS

MB ELECTRONICS
FOR VECTREX 8130 £19.95
1,2 single game
SCI FI SHOOT 'EM UP

Despite the name this game actually came out before Star Wars was even written. It started out life as a mainframe computer game back in the mid 60s and was later turned into a coin-op by Cinematronics in 1975. The basic idea is very simple – you have to shoot down ten of your opponent's ships before he does the same to you. Added excitement comes from the fact that you and your opponent are given limited fuel and laser fire. By getting your opponent to chase after you firing as he goes, you'll be at a distinct advantage, as he's likely to run out of ammo or fuel before you do. Even if you don't manage to hit your opponent's ship fair and square, a glancing shot can cripple and slow it down, making it an easier target.

Space Wars is, in addition, among the most challenging one player games available on a home system. The computer adversary is quite intelligent and knows all the tricks in the book. For two players, the game requires a second controller costing about £25.00. Altogether a challenging, infuriating but highly enjoyable game and an excellent addition to any Space gamer's library.□

SPIDER FIGHTER

ACTIVISION
FOR VCS AX021 £29.95
1,1+1 4 variations
SKILL SHOOT 'EM UP

Inspired by the Centipede game designed by Larry Miller. Your task is to

rid your fruit of such pests as Arachnids, Spy Pods, Green Widows and the treacherous Stinger insect. As usual, Activision excel in the colours they employ in this game, destined to be another winner.□

SPIDERMAN

PARKER
FOR VCS 931501 £29.95
1,1+1 6 variations
CLIMBING

This game is a bit like the arcade game 'Crazy Climber' in which you have to scale the wall of a high tower block. However in spiderman you have additional complications ranging from crooks appearing who try to cut your web, to the dreaded Green Goblin himself at the very top of the building, who is guarding the Super bomb that spiderman must defuse. A fun game which features some nice graphics, but fans of super heroes would be better off with the earlier Superman cartridge.□

SPIKE

MB ELECTRONICS
FOR VECTREX 8137 £29.95
1,1+1 single game
CLIMBING

The first game to utilise Vectrex voice features. Essentially a version of Donkey Kong with words. Our hero Spike's girlfriend Molly has been snatched by the Evil Spud. Spike must move along conveyer belts to climb ladders and retrieve the key that opens a cage into the next level. Along the way he has to avoid kick various creatures (including something that looks remarkably like Zebedee from the Magic Roundabout). The aim is to get Molly back from Spud's evil clutches. To do this he must make it to Spud's hideout. The voice is disappointing for two reasons. Firstly it adds nothing to the game play. Secondly the voice isn't as good as Mattel's. It could and should be improved. Leaving that aside, Spike is a good game.□

SQUIRREL AND SNAIL

GOLIATH
FOR VCS 83-216 £14.95
1 single game
CLIMBING

You, the squirrel, must pick up leaves from plants at the bottom of the screen and carry them up to the top to build an

object. While you're piling them up the leaves keep on falling and if you let one drop you lose a life. Colliding with a snail has the same effect. A reasonable game but not a world beater.□

STARGUNNER

TELESYS
FOR VCS £24.95
1,1+1 2 variations
SCI FI SHOOT 'EM UP

The game is saved from tedium by the graphics, which are very high calibre.

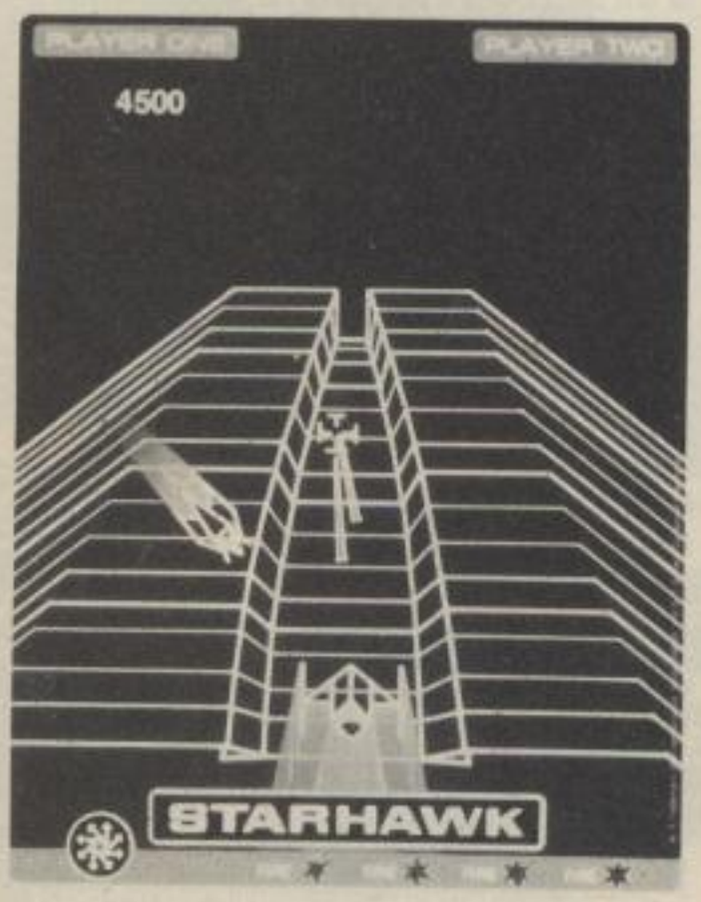
The gameplay seems to be devoid of any real objectives. A number of aliens simply fly around waiting to be shot, but they don't seem to be very menacing, they're not stealing humanoids and they're not trying to land. A mothership creature fires at you from above but you can't shoot her.

A good game for a shop owner who wants something pretty for the window but not a gamer's game.□

STARHAWK

MB ELECTRONICS
FOR VECTREX 8127 £19.95
1,2 1 variation
SCI FI SHOOT 'EM UP

If you're one of those people who still like a good old fashioned shoot 'em up but find adventure games too much like hard work, then this is the game for you. You don't have to worry about destroying the wrong ship. Neither do you have to worry about getting blown up, because you can't! The game is played on a timed basis, beginning with 60 seconds for every 10,000 points scored. You control a cursor around the screen with the joystick, and button number four controls the firing. The



setting and shapes of some of the ships in this game are (quite coincidentally) reminiscent of those in the Death Star trench scene in the film Star Wars, so this game will not only appeal to Space gamers who don't want to use their brains overmuch, but also to budding Luke Skywalkers and other Star Wars fan.□

STARSHIP

MB ELECTRONICS
FOR VECTREX 8125 £19.95
1,1+1 1 variation
SCI FI SHOOT 'EM UP

MB's answer to Star Raiders should really appeal to all Trekkies as it is loosely based on the immensely popular Star Trek film and television series. You assume the role of Captain Kirk (or Scotty if you prefer). Your task is to travel in the starship Enterprise through seven sectors of a galaxy in order to reach the Klingon mother ship which can only be destroyed by a single precise hit. En route you encounter a continuous pummelling from the Klingons and the Romulans, who are out to deplete your energy and laser supplies and, by so doing eventually destroy the Enterprise. Help is at hand, though, in the shape of a friendly Star Fleet space station where you can dock to replenish supplies. There is also a Black Hole which serves as a short cut to sector seven. among the most addictive of the Vectrex space games available so far.□

STAR WARS – JEDI ARENA

PARKER
FOR VCS 931507 £29.95
1,1v1 8 variations paddles
MOVIE TIE IN

Although this isn't actually based on any of the films, it is inspired by some of the ideas. It is basically a Lightsabre duel with the help of a Remote, a little droid about the size of a snooker ball. Both you and the other Jedi are surrounded by protective walls made up of bricks that can be knocked out by aiming the remote carefully. The rays from your opponent's sabre can be deflected by swinging your Lightsabre and blocking the shot. The battle rages until one of the Jedis in the Jedi Arena wins three matches.□

SUICIDE MISSION

STARPATH
FOR VCS AR4102 £15.95
1,1+1 4 variations
SCI FI SHOOT 'EM UP
Requires Supercharger £29.95

If you read this game's blurb in the catalogue you might easily get the impression that it's similar to Imagic's Microsurgeon as there is a lot of stuff about travelling through blood streams, warding off viruses etc. However, once loaded, the game turns out to be a jazzed up Asteroids, with a red background and bubble-like substitutes for the Asteroids.

In fact, both in graphics and control it's much better than Asteroids and thus to be recommended.□

SURFER'S PARADISE

VIDEO GEMS
FOR VCS 2123 £14.95
1 2 games
SKILL

A very American idea for a game from the Hong Kong-based company Video Gems.

The game itself is in two phases. The first involves you riding along on the crest of a wave trying to stay afloat and jumping when the shark goes for your ankles. If the shark is successful or if you fall in then you go into the second phase. This requires you to swim through a shipwreck avoiding killer jelly-fish before surfacing by your abandoned surfboard. Once you have done this, phase one begins again.

When so many video games seem to be more or less the same thing, it's refreshing to see a completely original idea. This one is definitely worth checking out.□

SWORDS AND SERPENTS

IMAGIC
FOR INTELLIVISION IM10566
£29.95
1,2 3 variations
ADVENTURE

A game closely based on Dungeons and Dragons, set in a series of dungeons full of treasures and various nasties such as dragons and black knights. With control of the white knight, it's your task to pick up treasure while trying to escape from the dungeon and defeating everyone in your path. You do receive some help from the wizard. He weaves magical spells to protect you if you can manage to guard him for the length of time it takes him to find his spells.□

TAPE WORM

SPECTRAVISION
FOR VCS SA204 £9.95
1,1+1 4 variations
CHILDREN'S SKILL

Despite its rather unsavoury title the game itself is actually a hi-tech version of Surround. Slinky, the hero, trots around the screen trying to get to the beans before the spider at the bottom of the screen gets to the fruit. As Slinky progresses, he encouters more valuable fruit and sneakier adversaries. A great game for all those who liked Surround.□

TIME MACHINE

GOLIATH
FOR VCS 83-112 £14.95
1 single game
SCI FI SHOOT 'EM UP

No matter how good an idea is for a video game, a programmer's expertise can make or break it. In the case of this one the designer has definitely failed to come up with the goods. The idea is to fly horizontally or vertically, shooting just about everything in sight. However, the graphics are nowhere near as good as shown in the leaflet (which is unusual) and the actual control of the ship is very sluggish and clumsy, which makes the game no fun t all to play. Not one person TV Gamer showed this to liked it. This is, without doubt, one to avoid.□

TIME RACE

GOLIATH
FOR VCS 83-212 £14.95
1 single game
SCI FI SHOOT 'EM UP

One of the poorest of the Goliath batch – you just shoot everything in sight. Your enemies are low resolution spaceships that look like something a three-year-old made out of Lego. Steer clear of this one.□

TOM BOY

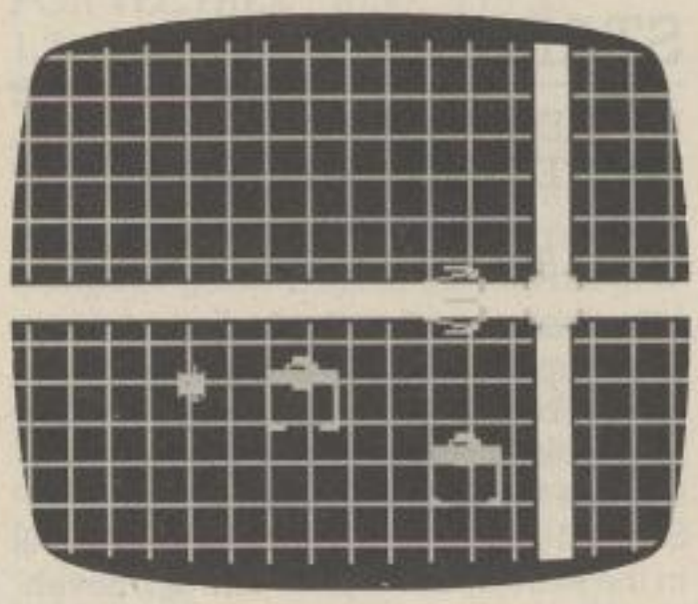
GOLIATH
FOR VCS 83-316 £14.95
1 single game
CHILDREN'S CLIMBING

This was originally a ZiMAG game called 'I want my Mummy', as featured in the Summer issue of TVG. The graphics have been modified slightly but it is still the same game. You have to make your little character move around, ignite stardust ladders and then climb them to get to the top of the screen whilst avoiding little creatures that look like a dead ET. I though this game was good when ZiMAG had it and I still think so now.□

TRON SOLAR SAILER

MATTEL ELECTRONICS
FOR INTELLIVISION 5893 £29.95
1 single game
ADVENTURE MOVIE TIE-IN
Needs Intellivoice module £45.95

The third and easily the best of the Tron games available. As it needs an Intellivoice, it works out to be fairly costly. This game depicts the final scene in the film where Tron, his girlfriend Yori and 'User' Flynn steal it in order to cross the Sea of Simlation to reach and destroy the MCP (Master Control Program). In the game you are equipped with a code to use against the MCP but to reach it you have to

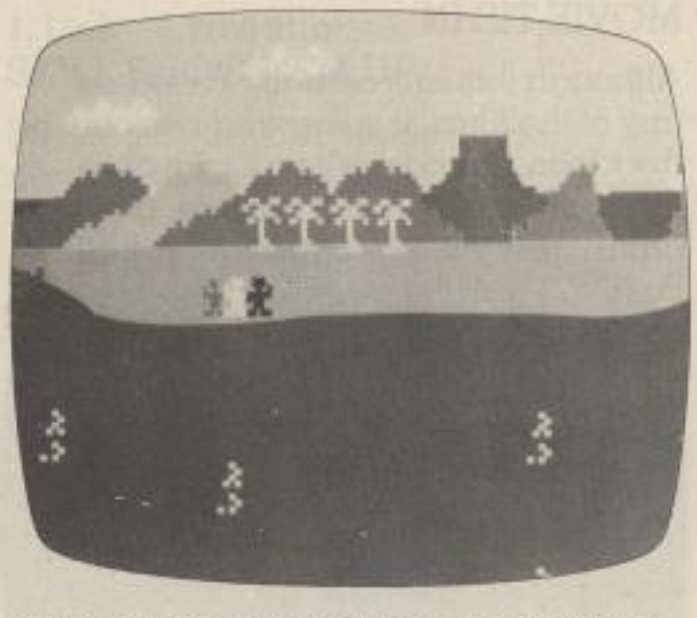


negotiate a hazardous journey first of all. If you're going to buy a Tron game, then get this one.□

TROPICAL TROUBLE

IMAGIC
FOR INTELLIVISION IM7605
£29.95
1,1+1 4 variations
SKILL

This is the sequel to Beauty and the Beast. It features all the same characters and, again you play Bashful Buford who is after Horrible Hank – he's the one who has pinched your girlfriend. Perhaps Buford ought to consider finding himself a new girlfriend, one who isn't so much trouble. This time she's been taken to an island and Buford must batle his way through several different scenes,



dodging obstacles in an attempt to get back his girl. You begin by avoiding rolling boulders and go on to dodge lava splats and other such nasties until you reach the bridge at the far side of the island. This you must cross in order to push Hank into the water.□

TURBO

CBS ELECTRONICS
FOR COLECO COL74518 £49.95
1,1+1 4 variations
DRIVING

Based on an arcade game – as are most titles these days – but with a difference. Instead of having to shoot everything in sight, your driving skills are put to the test in a breakneck speed chase. The game comes complete with a driving controller, consisting of a steering wheel and foot accelerator and uses a hand controller as a gearstick. The great thing about this game is the constant change of settings. Starting off in a city, the scene progresses through countryside, desert, winding roads, tunnels, even making a brief trip to the sea-side. Well worth the initial outlay since the controller is included and visually it is the most exciting driving game around.□

TUTANKHAM

PARKER
FOR VCS £29.95
1,1+1 8 variations
ADVENTURE SHOOT 'EM UP

Fans of the arcade or Intellivision versions may well be disappointed with this translation – the graphics and sound are both inferior.

The object is to work your way through four levels of King Tut's tomb, picking up treasures and the key to the next level along the way. Scores of different nasties run around and stir things, including bats, beetles and something that looks like ET. Despite the shortcomings this one takes a good deal of dexterity and is recommended.□

VANGUARD

ATARI
FOR VCS CX2669 £29.95
1,1+1 single game
SCI FI SHOOT 'EM UP

This game certainly tops the chart for the most colourful video game around. It is set in a series of caverns which are controlled by the evil Gond. You must lead the Vanguard expedition in your space 'copter and destroy Gond before he destroys you. On the way you are confronted with a variety of dangers including enemy fighters, force fields and energy barriers. At the beginning of each game and at each turning point you are shown a map of the route. The nice thing about this is that when the caverns are vertical the screen scrolls from top to bottom. The graphics are truly excellent.□

VECTRON

MATTEL ELECTRONICS
FOR INTELLIVISION 5788 £29.95
1,1+1 4 variations
SCI FI SHOOT 'EM UP

One of Mattel's most colourful space games, in which your task is to use your droid Vectron to build laser bases and destroy enemies. Careful tactics are needed to win at this fast moving space game.□

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TVG 3/84

VENTURE

CBS ELECTRONICS
FOR VCS COL75283 £29.95

FOR COLECO COL74286 £29.95

1,1v1 8 variations
1 single game
ADVENTURE

Venture is the first Adventure-type game to come from CBS Electronics for the colecovision and looks destined to be a winner.

You control a cartoon-like character called Winky, and race from room to room collecting treasure, killing monsters of every sort and evading the invincible ghouls, who patrol the dungeons. With the good graphics, catchy tunes and various rooms and adversaries, Venture will be top of the list for those who don't fancy piloting a star-fighter or chasing cats.

Overall, a good reproduction of the arcade game of the same name, and one of Coleco's better cartridges.□

WALL DEFENDER

BOMB
FOR VCS CA285 £21.95

WEBWARP

MB ELECTRONICS
FOR VECTREX 8136 £29.95
1,1+1 single game
SCI FI SHOOT 'EM UP

Unlike most Sci Fi games for the Vectrex (eg Space Wars), this one gives you a 3D perspective view and not just a flat screen image. As the Hawk King you fly along a kind of 'U' shaped web. The main objective is to capture 20 weird creatures whilst avoiding the Dragon's "Star Shells" and picking off the guardians in the web. The web is clearly defined and each of the Aliens is, as far as we've found, a different shape. We're told that no one has yet collected that elusive 20th Alien. If you managed it, take a picture, send it to us and we'll try and print it. Without a doubt the finest graphics for the Vectrex to date.□

WIZARD OF WOR

CBS ELECTRONICS

FOR VCS COL75358 £29.95
1,2 2 variations
FOR INTELLIVISION COL76356
£29.95
1,1+1 4 variations
SCI FI SHOOT 'EM UP

You are a Space warrior trapped in a series of mazes, inhabited by roaming monsters who are trying to shoot you. You must shoot them instead and progress through the mazes until you run out of lives. In certain mazes a demon appears who runs round the maze much more quickly than the monsters. If you shoot him you will either get a big point bonus or a chance to take out the Wizard himself. If you succeed at either of these you are treated to a graphics display in which the maze flashes in different colours – very rewarding. One of the best and most challenging maze games around.

ZAXXON

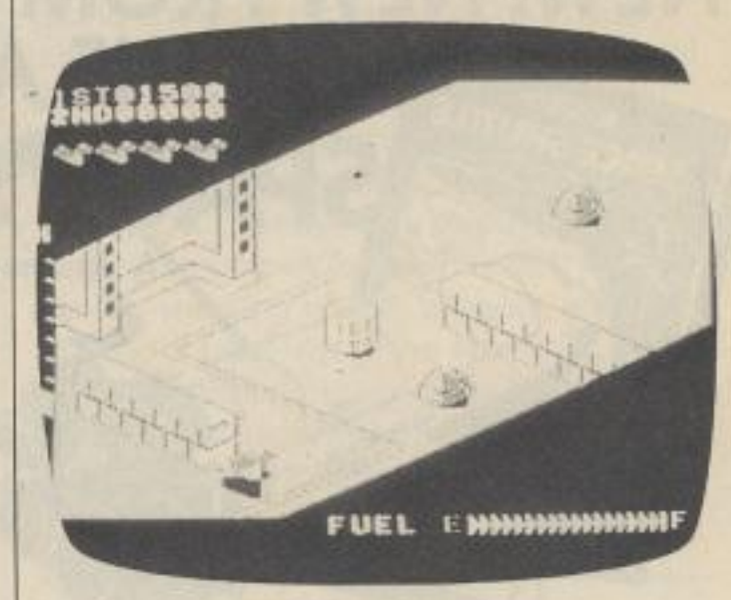
CBS ELECTRONICS

FOR VCS COL75358 £29.95
1 single game

FOR COLECO COL74278 £29.95
1,1+1 8 variations

SCI FI SHOOT 'EM UP

This game is based on the popular coin-op by Sega. With control of a small Starfighter armed with a front laser, you must fly across a series of Space Platforms destroying all the installations as you go. After leaving each platform you have a brief flight in space and a space dog-fight with enemy fighters.



The Coleco version is the only game on the market that scrolls diagonally and Coleco really have made a convincing job of it. The graphics and sound are superb. All in all, this is about the best video game translation from arcade to home so far produced.

In the VCS version you get a head-on view of the Space Platform and poorer sound and graphics.□

Z-TACK

BOMB
FOR VCS CA283 £21.95
1,1+1 4 games
SCI FI SHOOT 'EM UP

This is probably the second best video game to come from this new company, BOMB, the best being Assault (see separate review). Your mission is to shoot at various cities as you pass above them in your flying saucer. They don't take kindly to this attack (to them *you* are the Space Invader) and retaliate by firing back and launching fighters against you.

You can fire left, right and down in much the same way as you do in Cosmic Ark as you shoot your way through a total of six different landscapes.

Not a world beating game but well worth having a try if you can. In short, if you love cosmic Ark you'll like Z-Tack.□

GUIDE TO LISTINGS

NUMBER OF PLAYERS

1	One player against the game.
1+1 1+2 1+3	Two, three or four players, each taking turns.
2	Two players, playing the game together.
1v1	Two players, playing each other, with the game simply keeping score and acting as referee.

UB·TV GAMER CLUB·TV GAMER CLUB·TV GAMER CLU

Any VCS clubs?

Enclosed is my entry form for the Coleco competition. Tricky lot aren't you? "One with the reference to James Bond", well that was downright sneaky, but still I persevered.

I'm really writing in to find out if there are any VCS clubs in my area. Or am I doomed to run through endless rooms and zap countless aliens alone?

Finally, I'd like to point out (although you're probably sick of being told about it) that you mixed up your photos of Vanguard and Centipede in the last issue. We're not all perfect, are we?

ANDY WALKER, Middlesbrough

As far as we know, there are no official clubs in your area that deal with the VCS. Most areas have microcomputer user groups but there seems to be very few, if any, for the users of dedicated games systems. However, there may be unofficial groups around so don't despair. If you run a user group that is solely committed to games and game playing then write in and let us know and we will try and compile a list of addresses. Look out for that in future issues. DW

Listings please

Perhaps the next edition could have computer programs for different makes of computers, some more competitions to win smaller prizes, details of other games systems and chances to win computers?

JUSTIN COPPS

There are already many magazines that print listings for micros. We at TV Gamer didn't see a need for it for several reasons. First and foremost we find program listings dead boring to read, even if they are for your system. Using them means spending hours typing the whole thing in and then spending even longer weeding out the mistakes. In short, programs are more trouble than they're worth. Secondly we have had a lot of readers writing in telling us what they think of the magazine and the general feeling seems to be that they're interested in playing games, not learning to type out of a mag. DW

Kong Coleco query

Please could you tell me if or when these cartridges will be released for use on the CBS/Coleco: Krazy Kong, Battlezone, Gold Rush and Astro Wars?

IAN MAHER, Co. Kilkenny

None of these games mentioned are currently available for the CBS/Coleco and we have heard of no plans for the future concerning these games either. If and when we do we'll let you know. DW

Married bliss?

Last November I travelled with my husband (we were on honeymoon) to my new brother-in-law's house in Kent.

That's where I saw the Vectrex system, and I thought it was such a good idea to separate screen games from broadcast TV that, when we set up house in Skegness, we bought a Vectrex of our own. We've already bought five games. My favourite is Minestorm and I have now reached Minestorm 10 with a score of 112635. Personally, I think it was £125 well spent.

Sorry the writing's bad but our dog has just had puppies and it is only 3.45am so I am still half asleep.

SONIA ELTON, Skegness

Brill arcade laser

You might already know about the Segas "Laser Disc Astron Belt", which could be the arcade game of the future.

You sit in a cockpit, rather the same as "Turbo", and you control a space ship much like the Buck Rogers space ship which is made up of computer graphics. The difference is that the rest of the screen is taken from real film, held on the disc, and the space ship is superimposed onto the picture. I have had a go and, believe me, it is BRILLIANT. The speed with which the alien space ships attack and fire is amazing. If you have had a go or do so in the near future, you might notice that some scenes and ships are taken from a Saturday sci-fi puppet serial called 'Starfleet".

The scenes are amazing, you travel over planets, through rocky caverns, black holes, alien landscapes and asteroid storms and much, much more, and it is all done through moving pictures. You even attack alien bases and destroy them. It's uncanny the way that you can actually blow up moving pictures on the screen, and can also get destroyed by alien fire or hitting an asteroid or such like.

To enhance the realism, the stars move towards you which gives you a feeling of speed and movement. Also there are two speakers behind your head.

To get a totally new game you take out the disc and place another one into the cockpit. It costs 40p a go but it is well worth it.

D. PRICE

If you want to know more about laser coin-ops, Andy Harris has written a review in his Arcade spot on page 32. DW

To err is human...

I have found that you have made two mistakes in your Atari software reviews. One is on page 21 where a picture is wrongly captioned as Centipede. The other is on page 39

where again a picture is wrongly labelled as Vanguard. They should be the other way around.

Incidentally, there are many more new games for Intellivision:- Motorcross, Buzz Bomb, Hand Battle, Minator, Pinball, Mystic Castle, Bump 'n' Jump, Treasure of Tarmin, Arctic Square and Bomb Squad. These new games have been listed with prices but no release dates. Even TV Gamer has no information yet, so why have the shops got these games without you knowing it?

P.J. NYE, Sydenham

The answer is that these are in the shops' catalogues, but not actually yet in the shops, I'm afraid. Buzz Bombers and Treasure of Tarmin are reviewed in this issue and should be in the shops by the time TV Gamer reaches the streets. Motor Cross, Minator and Bomb Squad have now been removed from the latest catalogues and are not expected to cross the Atlantic in the forseeable future, and as for the rest we can only say that they are expected "soon"!

By the way, yours is the 999th letter correcting our blunder over the Centipede and Vanguard pix – sorry, folks, we will *really* check these pix next time. DW

Not as good as board games

Although 48-years-old now, I have had an intense interest in games practically all my life and have a large collection of imported complex American board war-games. I alternate these days between playing these games and the TV type.

Video games have a long, long way to go before they can match the realism of board games, but can be great fun to play.

Back in late 1981, I decided to purchase a games console. Hooked on board games of USA football and baseball (as well as war games) I naturally chose one that these games could be played on. Atari was out for that reason, and the Mattel was over £200 in those days, so I settled for a Philips G7000 and purchased with it the two sports cartridges I required.

The trouble was, whereas at least five places in my home town sold Atari and Mattel, none handled the Philips range. I had to travel all the way to Canterbury to buy additional cartridges. (I purchased the console in London). Over the next year, I expanded my collection to about 16 games, many of them space ones. Some of these we played literally thousands of times.

However, I was conscious of the fact that the Philips was a "third" runner, reviews on games often criticising the graphics. I secretly longed for the greatly improved graphics of the Mattel which played the sports games that appealed to me. Seeing their soccer game played made me realise how greatly superior to the Philips version it was in graphics.

So when the Mattel came down in price, I sold the Philips and purchased an Intellivision system. The results have not been good. Certainly the graphics are a vast improvement but the games themselves are decidedly inferior.

As I mentioned before, games such as Satellite Attack, Laser War, Freedom Fighters, Space Monster, were ones we played endlessly and had terrific fun with them. The sound effects and explosions on the Philips are 10 times more impressive than on the Mattel, and the first space game we tried on the latter, Star Strike, has been voted by us all a colossal dud.

Mattel's Baseball, although visually impressive, is ludicrous in play.

So a sharp lesson has been learned here. You don't get better games with more impressive graphics or larger memory. Readers be warned ...

P. DUNN, Folkestone

Supercharger challenge

I am considering buying either a Colecovision or Atari VCS with Super-charger. I am looking for quality and interest as well as a challenge.

The Coleco is the superior system against an Atari but if the Supercharger. I am looking for about the same. How do they compare for games quality etc?

As I don't own either, trying to judge for myself in shops is very difficult, so can I please have your expert advice?

B. WALTON, Co. Durham

A VCS plus supercharger will cost you about £100, but the Colecovision is around £150. Of course, the Coleco has the larger memory. If you buy the Atari system you have access to around 250 games (10 available on the Supercharger at the time of writing with more promised soon). On the other hand Coleco offers about 25 high-quality games with access to the ordinary Atari games via an adapter costing around £50. You pays your money ... A word of caution – the Coleco Atari adapter does not fit the Atari Supercharger. DW

007 Atari?

Please could you tell me if there is a James Bond Game for the Atari. If so could you tell me where to get it.

HASSAN MEHMET, Battersea

Parker have cancelled their James Bond game due to programming difficulties which is why we haven't featured it in the magazine. DW

Right to swap?

I bought the Intellivision game system about two months ago with five cartridges (still boxed with instructions), the voice module and the Imagic case. The cartridges are Frogger, Astrosmash, Lock 'n' Chase, Vectron and B17 Bomber. I was wondering if any shop would exchange it for CBS Colecovision and Turb?

IVOR JACOBS, Manchester

Some of the larger shops and mail order firms do part-exchange one system for another but obviously they will be out to make a profit at the customers' expense. You would be well advised to try and sell it privately as you are bound to get more money for it that way. DW

Continued from page 18

already on screen somewhere). If you are at A or B, you should wait till the robot appears before firing to the left.

However, at C, D or E fire immediately as the bullet will not arrive before the robot comes into being. In fact, waiting may give the robot enough time to dodge into A', (see diagram) thereby spoiling the whole strategy. As soon as you have fired, move to the hiding position (A' to E') and wait till the robot bullet passes. As soon as the bullet has passed, you can move back into position (A to E) to repeat the gambit until your sixth bullet has been fired.

Advanced players will be able to use a refined version of this strategy which allows you to get several robots with one bullet. Allow a robot to get past point D towards you at point E. Hold your fire until he has passed D and he cannot dodge to D'. The bullet you then fire will not only destroy him but the new robot who appears at the end of the row past A.

This is possible because the bullets continue to the end wall even after they have destroyed a robot.

GREY ROBOTS

After 5000 points, when bats are replaced by grey robots and the original grey robot by a blue robot, this strategy can become even more fruitful. If you can hit a bat during this manoeuvre you will pick off the replacement robot as well. Careful timing can lead repeatedly to hitting up to three robots (one blue and two grey) with each shot. This really sends your score rocketing.

If you cannot organize simultaneous robot massacres, don't worry! While the blue robot (which appears at 5000 points) always moves towards you, he is slower than his grey brethren, so concentrate on him and the 500 points he give you. Use the Fire and Run tactic to pick him off. Wait around a corner and as the robot comes into view, fire a shot which he will walk into (see picture). Even if he fires a shot, you can avoid it by dodging into cover as soon as you have fired. If you should miss (unlikely after a small amount of practice), simply repeat the ambush at the next corner.

GETTING THE WHITE ROBOT

After 15,000 points, a destroyed blue robot is replaced by a white robot. The Bottom Row Ambush now becomes distinctly dangerous as this monster requires three shots to put him out of action. The Fire and Run tactic can still be used, but a new strategy – Fire and Hide – is much safer and more effective.

Provided you still have at least three bullets left in your current gun, make for the central hideout. Stand in front of the entrance, and when the robot begins to move into your line of fire, shoot and then move swiftly into the shelter.

It is vital to do both before the robot appears above the level of the shelter, as he will fire as soon as you are in sight. If anything, fire and hide too soon. You will be surprised how readily the robot will walk into your bullet, but you will also be caught off-guard if you hang around in the open. Wait for the robot to go away and then repeat the tactic twice.

Three hits will blow the robot up and you will have time to go out, use up any odd remaining bullets and pick up your new gun before the next white robot arrives. Never attempt this hideout tactic without at least three bullets, as it can be very awkward to get out of this shelter when being pinned down by a white robot.

If you can go in with a full six bullets however, you can double your success.

THE BLACK BULLY

At 30,000 points, the last white robot is replaced by a black one. He still needs three bullets to destroy him, but extra caution is required for two reasons.

Firstly, his bullets absorb yours, so you must always fire before he is in line-of-sight (a technique you will have learnt from Fire and Run and Fire and Hide). Never face him down a long corridor. You merely waste bullets and will probably lose a man.

Secondly, his bullets can destroy your shelter so Fire and Hide should be abandoned. Your new-found skill and flexibility (if you have managed to get this far) will make Fire and Run a more effective tactic than when you first tried it. Pick the areas of the maze with lots of corners and turns. Here you have the advantage. Keep away from the long corridors which were so useful in the opening stages. Now they are death traps.

DESTROY THE INVISIBLE

Take careful note of the way the white and black robots move. They have set responses to situations and knowledge of these will prove invaluable at 80,000 points when the last black robot is replaced by an invisible one.

Now you are really living on your wits. His position can only be determined by three things.

1. He moves in exactly the same way as the white and black robots, so Fire and Run tactics can be judged in the same way.
2. You can tell his exact position when he fires a bullet.
3. When you hit him the first or second time (still three bullets to dispatch this version) he flashes to register the wound.

It is imperative that you keep moving, stopping only to fling a shot behind you before turning a corner (the safest place), but only when you are sure he is there. Now, when wasting bullets is the easiest thing to do, is the time when you can least afford it.

Your only consolation is the game doesn't get any more difficult. This stage is a real challenge and there are no hard and fast rules for disposing of your enemy. However, when you master this stage, any observer will think you are positively psychic, throwing bullets into apparently empty space and being rewarded with an exploding robot.

The basic movements of robots, spiders and bats are too complex to be dealt with in the space available, but they are repetitive and close attention will reap its own reward. Counting those six bullets becomes second nature and you can be well on your way to the next weapon before your new opponent appears.

Keep away from the spider's web in the later stages (it's too easy to get trapped with no escape route) and you will find even the most aggressive robots can be dealt with. □

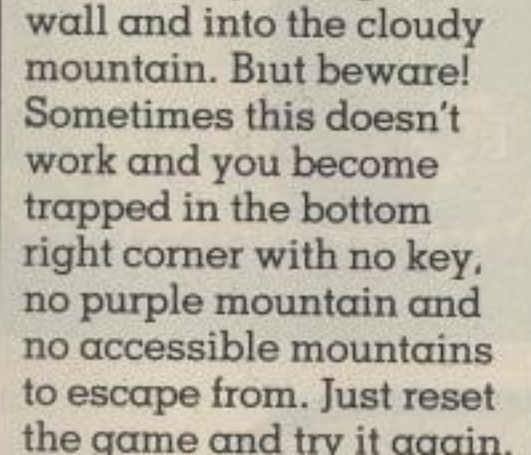
Happy Hunting!

EASTER-EGGS

Paul Smart writes...
I am writing to tell you of my find in Raiders of the Lost Ark. I was trapped in one of the dungeons in the room of shining light without my ship or revolver, so I went out of the secret passage at the bottom. I then found that to get back into the temple entrance room I had to go via the spider room. But when I got into the temple entrance room I found that the protrusion at the bottom of the screen had disappeared and at the top left hand corner slowly descended what seemed to be someone in a sitting position, which I could not get past. I also noticed that two pillars had appeared at the bottom of the screen. I later found that these could be destroyed using the ship or revolver and that the person in the sitting position could be knocked back inside the wall, far enough for me to get past, using the grenade from the Black Market. Please note, the grenade only does this if used outside the temple entrance room.
Paul Smart, Scotland.

N. Gale writes...
I have discovered a fault or bug, in the Intellivision Advanced Dungeons and Dragons cartridge. Here's how to find it. Set the cartridge in the console and press the gold disc to start the game. Then press key 2 five times to get into the top left corner of the screen, then press key 1 twice. The first action causes your three men to disappear off the screen; the second makes you reappear in the middle somewhere. If you then press key 6, you'll move to the bottom right of the screen. Then simply manoeuvre your men about to find a purple mountain in the bottom right sector, so as to obtain a key to enter and pass through the gate/ wall and into the cloudy mountain. But beware! Sometimes this doesn't work and you become trapped in the bottom right corner with no key, no purple mountain and no accessible mountains to escape from. Just reset the game and try it again.
N. Gale, Bournemouth.

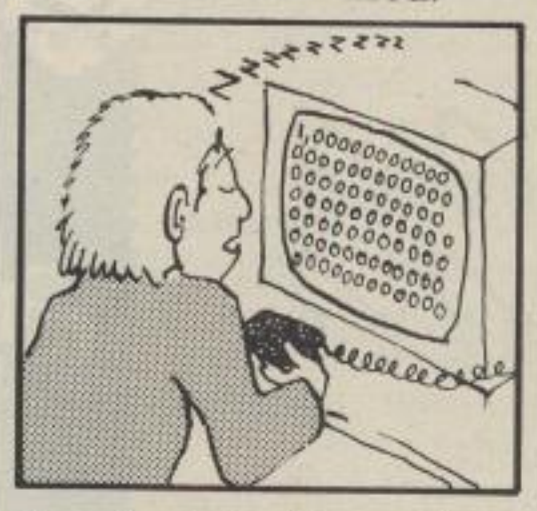
Elaine Brown writes...
I think I have found a bug in Centipede. It occurred when I was switching it on. I did this quickly and instead of centipede moving on the screen it



stayed still and after 10 seconds a scorpion followed by a spider flashed across the bottom of the screen.
Elaine Brown, Edinburgh.

Jason Brown writes...
Having just read your appeal for Colecovision bugs apart from Donkey Kong, I am writing to tell you about a bug on Zaxxon that I discovered a few months ago.

In the middle of the Mobot fortress on skill level 4, deliberately crash your fighter into a missile on Mobot (you can keep repeating the whole process again and again slowly clocking up points). When the game resumes, an enemy fighter will be heading for you. Shoot this at the last moment. When Zaxxon comes on, shoot his missile but make sure you destroy it after it has been fired.



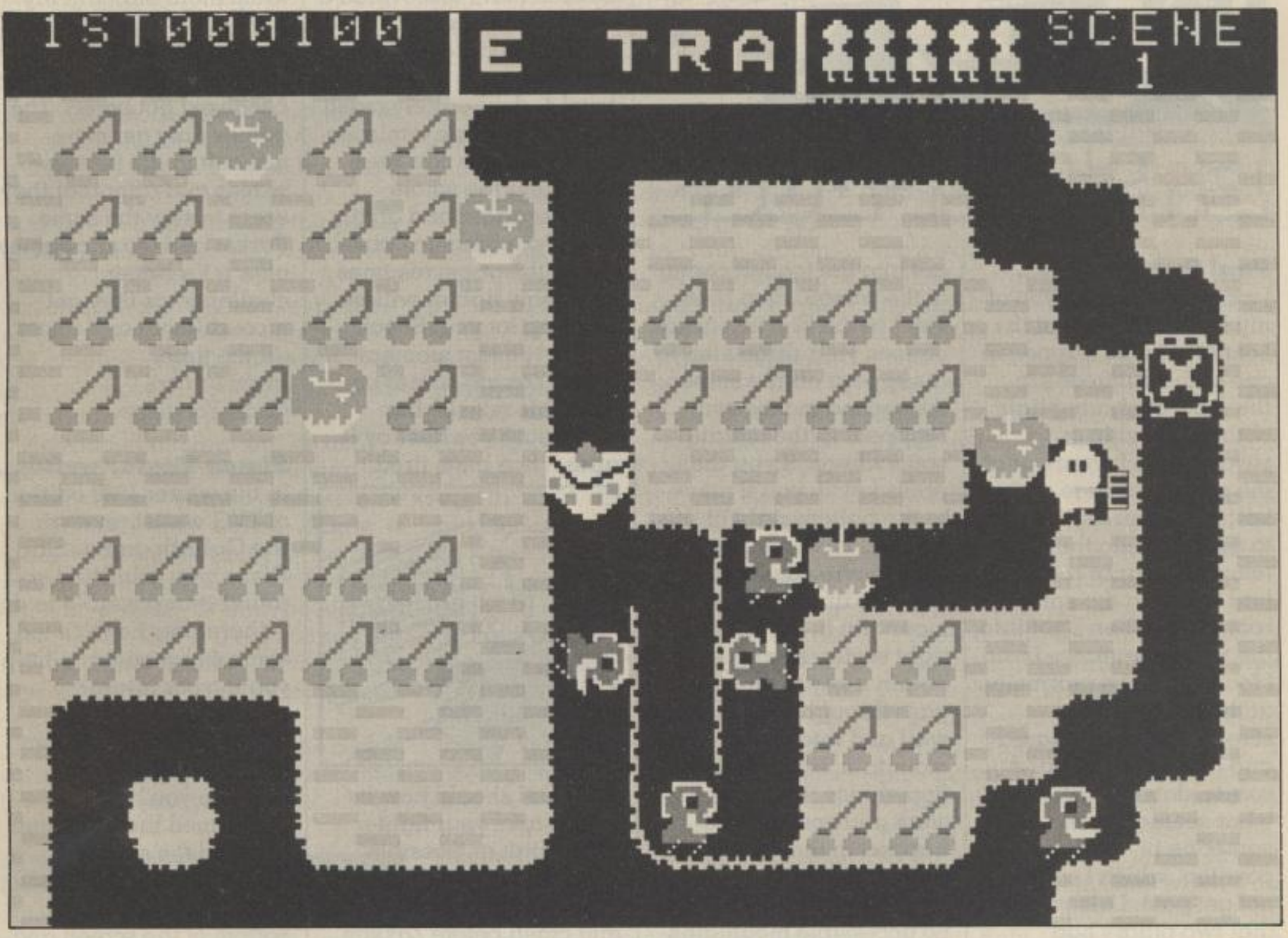
Your fuel should now be low so take your fighter up as high as possible before it runs out. You should hopefully run out and crash before Zaxxon leaves the screen. If you can do this then you should find that you will not have lost a life and the game will resume at the point marked.

I have also discovered a "pleasant" bug on Donkey Kong that hasn't yet been mentioned. It is quite simple to attempt but it seems to be random whether it works.

On the third stage, jump onto the left most lift from the bottom girder on the left. As you go up, position Mario so that he is almost falling off to the left. When you get to the top, step off to the left on to the top left girder. If you are lucky you may hear a "long drop" noise which will continue for a couple of seconds. This is very difficult to do and you will probably only get it to work very occasionally.

I am not going to buy another Coleco-made cartridge until they make them more difficult. My high score on skill for Donkey Kong is over a million and I packed it in because I got bored. The games only get more difficult in the first few waves and after that they seem to stay the same. Parker and Imagic games offer a far better challenge as they get more difficult and faster all the time.
Jason Brown, North Yorkshire.

Simon Taylor writes...
In the winter 1983 edition of TVG whilst reviewing the Goliath game, Skin Diver, you admitted you found it impossible to do. I, therefore, have listed some suggestions to help you in your future attempts at this, admittedly difficult, but manageable game.
1. When you have harpooned the first three fish and the screen is momentarily clear of fish, make your way to the bottom of the screen and prepare to harpoon the next fish to appear.
2. When this fish has been harpooned, immediately swim behind the seaweed mass at the bottom centre of the screen and move your joystick downwards.
3. After doing this, you will find yourself on a new level with required amphorae situated at the bottom of the screen.
4. Obtain the central amphorae first, taking care to avoid the coral polyps. Get the other two amphorae, then leave by the original entrance.
5. Swim back to your boat making sure you don't get eaten, and after the game has finished scoring, you can repeat the procedure again.
Simon Taylor, Manchester.



Mr. Do!

What with Bad Guys and Blue Choppers, not to mention the Alpha Monsters, Mr Do has a hard time trying to eat the cherries in his orchard. But there are ways of making life easier, as Dave Trutzenbach finds out.

This game from CBS Electronics depicts Mr Do trying to harvest the cherries from his orchard. The only way he can do this is to mow the grass, so making a path to reach them.

While he is making his way to the cherries, seven Bad Guys appear at intervals from the centre of the screen. Their aim is to catch Mr Do to stop him from reaching the cherries.

Mr Do's only weapons are a power ballwhich he can throw, and apples (also in the orchard), placed randomly about the screen, which he can use to squash the Bad Guys. Mr Do can achieve this by burrowing under each apple to make it fall. But BEWARE – these can also squash Mr Do if he does not move out of the way fast enough.

Above the playfield the word EXTRA is shown. These letters are represented by Alpha Monsters who are shown moving from letter to letter. When all seven Bad Guys have appeared on the screen a treat appears from the centre (cake, biscuits etc).

SPECIFICATION

NAME:	MR DO
SUPPLIER:	CBS ELECTRONICS
PRICE:	£29.95
FORMAT:	COLECOVISION
RATING:	Value 3
	Graphics 3
	Sound 4
	Gameplay 4
	Arcade 3

If Mr Do can get to the treat when the Alpha Monster is yellow it will appear on the screen accompanied by three Blue Choppers.

The Alpha Monster and the Blue Choppers are able to move anywhere on the screen. They are also capable of moving the apples, eating the cherries or chomping Mr Do. So keep him out of their way.

You can get rid of these nasties in the same way as you do the Bad Guys – with the power ball or by squashing them with an apple. The Bad Guys will freeze as soon as the Alpha Monster and Blue Choppers appear on the screen. But they come to life again as soon as Mr Do has killed all the choppers.

If Mr Do reaches the treat while the Alpha Monster shows red, then neither the Alpha Monster nor the Blue Choppers appear on the screen and the Bad Guys become frozen, allowing you a few seconds to position Mr Do or pick up cherries.

On each screen the cherries are placed in groups of eight. If you can manage to get Mr Do to harvest a group of eight cherries without having to stop you will get bonus points, but be careful! If the Bad Guys are close behind Mr Do there might not be enough time to do this. If you drop an apple only a short distance it will remain whole, therefore blocking the path of the pursuing Bad Guys. This will not stop them getting to Mr Do, but it does take them a while to negotiate the apple.

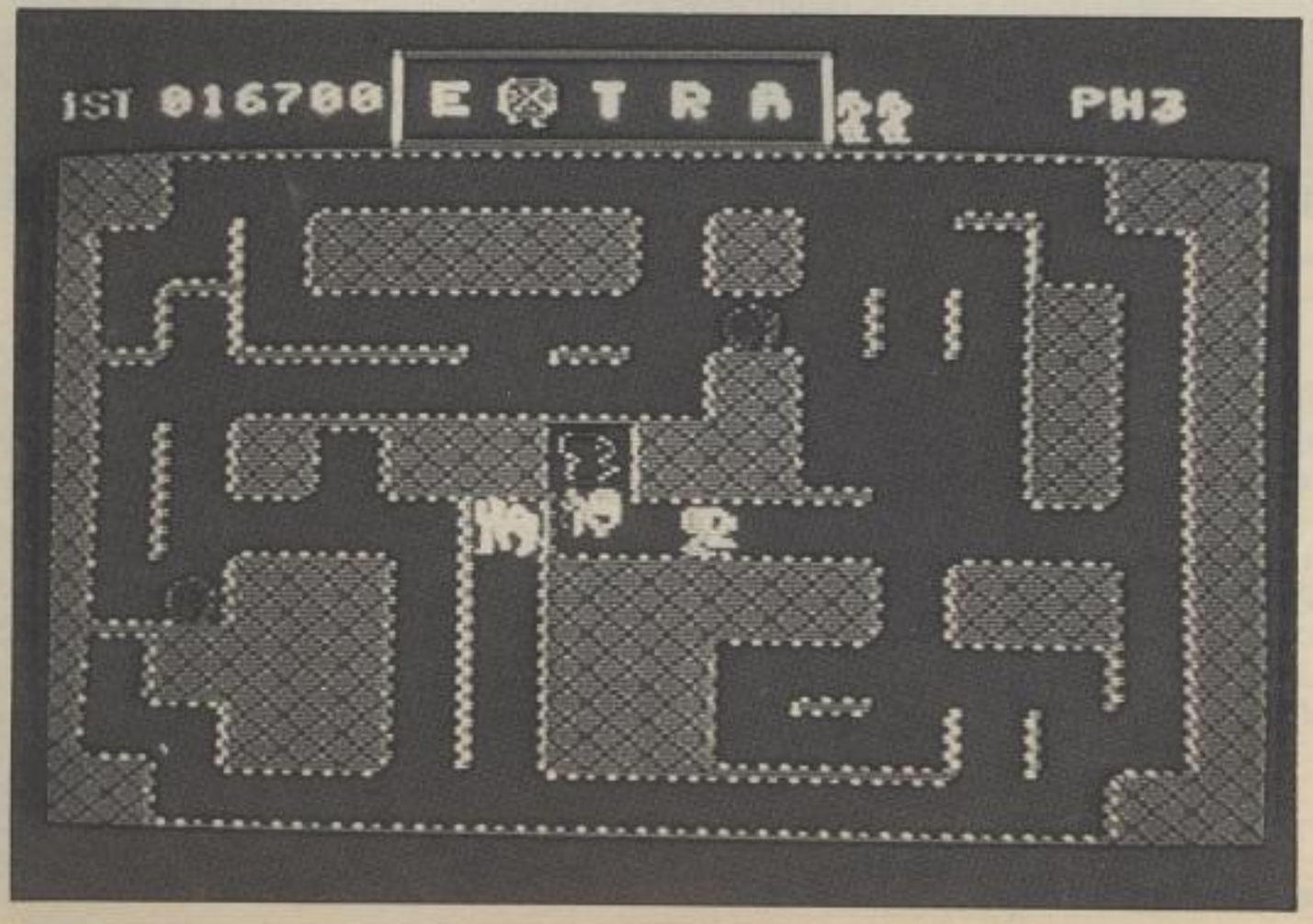
Occasionally the Bad Guys turn white. When this happens they are able to mow the grass themselves and make their own paths towards Mr Do. He can still kill them in the normal way, by using the power ball or by dropping an apple on them.

When using the power ball on any of the meanies it will always travel in the direction Mr Do is facing, and will travel along the mown paths, rebounding off the sides. It is even possible to throw the power ball through a wall but Mr do must be facing it, and the wall itself must be very thin.

When Mr Do throws the power ball, it will travel round the screen until it hits a meanie, but the time it takes to return to him varies. You will know when it has returned as there is a tinkling sound and white dots flash round Mr Do, but if you are concentrating on another part of the screen it is quite possible for you to miss this happening.

Occasionally, when an apple falls and splits open it will reveal a diamond. If this happens, get Mr Do to make his way towards it to pick it up as it is worth an extra 10,000 points and you are immediately transported to the next screen.

There are several different ways you and Mr Do can finish each screen and go on to the next one. You can do this either by eating all the cherries, killing all the Bad Guys, lighting up all the Alpha Monsters in Red to spell EXTRA (this also gives you an extra Mr Do) or by picking up a diamond.



It will be easier for Mr Do to harvest the crop of cherries if you can eliminate five or six Bad Guys first, as it is easier to avoid just one or two, but do not destroy them all until you really have to as you will be transported to the next screen.

Remember not to get Mr Do too near a group of Bad Guys when firing the power ball. After firing it, you are left defenceless for a while and the Bad Guys tend to move faster after one has been killed, especially on higher levels.

Try to get Mr Do to eat as many cherries as he can before he reaches the treat in the centre, as the Bad Guys move faster still after the Alpha Monsters and Blue Choppers have gone, making it difficult to get round the orchard to eat the cherries.

Sometimes, especially on the higher levels, it is better for Mr Do to eat the treat in the middle when the Alpha Monster is Red as there is not always enough time to shoot the Alpha Monster and contend with the Blue Choppers.

Speeds one and two are quite slow, and therefore better for the new player. Speed three is equivalent to the Arcade game, and the fourth speed is much faster.

Screen seven proves to be the most difficult. Mr Do must make his way to the nearest apple straight away, and then try to eliminate the Bad Guys by squashing them.

If you can manage to get through to the eighth screen you are almost on your way to a high score. *Good luck!*

DAVE TRUTZENBACH

Continued from page 31

broadcast like a normal TV programme. BBC's version is called Ceefax (pronounced *Seefax*), and ITV's is Oracle. You may have seen demonstrations in between proper TV transmissions. Proper Teletext is transmitted at the same time as regular TV, and you need a special decoder to get it. This can set you back a couple of hundred quid (which is why I called it "more or less" free) and not all games machines can handle Telesoftware, but when the hardware price comes down, this could be a very attractive idea.

For owners of the BBC B computer it is now possible to buy a teletext adaptor which will convert both an ordinary TV and the computer to accept teletext broadcasts.

Even more attractive is Prestel, which actually comes to you down the telephone lines, and turns your home TV set into a kind of computer terminal.

Originally, Prestel was very pricey: there was a subscription charge, a charge for computer time every time you connected up to it, the telephone costs, and often a charge per screenful of text displayed, whether that was a video game or the times of the latest package holidays to Costa Pacquet! The equipment was dear, too.

At first, British Telecom seemed to have ignored the fact that millions of people were buying home computers, which are actually much more suitable for connecting to Prestel than TV sets, and the service was aimed mainly at business users. Apart from specific types of trade, like travel agents, it was something of a flop. In the spring of '83, a number of things happened that made it much more attractive to home users.

First, they decided that if you hooked up to the Prestel computer in the evenings or at weekends, they wouldn't charge you computer time. Phone costs are also cheaper at that time, of course. Then, a service called Micronet 800 was announced, which was aimed specifically at the home computer user, and games software was one of the features offered. It costs about £100 a year to join, and for that you get the necessary hardware and software.

The bad news is that the only computers likely to be of interest to readers of this magazine which can be hooked up as yet are the Sinclair Spectrum and the BBC. Still, we're getting there, and Micronet is definitely going in the right direction, and of course once you've got the necessary attachment for your computer – a modem – to "talk" to other computers down the phone lines, you're not restricted to the Prestel computers. Theoretically, at least, you could talk to your mates' computers in the same way, as long as they, too, have modems.

This opens up the possibility of swapping programs over the phone. In the USA, Atari have even got a gadget which allows two people to play the same game at the same time with each other via the telephone – though it won't be available here until Atari have sorted out the rather different requirements of British Telecom equipment.

One thing you'll have to watch out for, which has already caught some Micronet users napping: even if it's all "free", it's amazing how those telephone charges can add up, even when it's just the cost of a local call. If you live a distance from the computer, it can really sting you when that quarterly bill comes in.

The future's gonna be fun, though, isn't it?

KARL DALLAS

Coming Soon in TV GAMER

IN-DEPTH REVIEWS: *We look at* ***Raiders of the Lost Ark*** *and reveal its secrets at last.* ***The Hobbit****, our first review of a computer adventure game*

THE CHAMPIONS: *Karl Dallas talks to Atari's reigning world champs – and they're British.*

SYSTEMS: *The* ***TI-99*** *– we ask, is this system still worth getting? We also look at the* ***ZX Spectrum*** *and its games.*

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